# The New REPUBLIC

## A Journal of Opinion

VOL. LVII NEW YORK, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 16, 1929 NUMBER 737


## Contents


The Week ..... 228

Editorials

The Ethical Basis of Reparations ..... 232
A Victory for Arbitration ..... 233

General Articles

British Labor in 1929 ..... S. K. Ratcliffe 235
Man (verse) ..... Harold Lewis Cook 237
Who Should Go to College? ..... Alexander Meiklejohn 238
The Decline of Ownership ..... Valeska Bari 241
Leaving the Farm ..... Marjorie McFarland 243
Washington Notes ..... T. R. B. 244
The Kingdom of God ..... Stark Young 245
Jimmie Is Exhubilant ..... Gilbert Seldes 247

Correspondence ..... 248

Reviews of Books

Yeats's Guide to the Soul ..... Edmund Wilson 249
Idea and Power in Wedlock ..... J. B. S. Hardman 251
The Critic as Artist ..... Melvin P. Levy 252
Motherhood in Bondage ..... Jean B. Temple 252
The Slave of Conquest ..... Lawrence S. Morris 253
Brooding Eagle ..... Babette Deutsch 253
For the New York Galleries ..... S. Y. 254
Fiction Notes ..... 254


## The Week

THE annual report of S. Parker Gilbert, which was received with hostility in Germany and Britain, and approbation in France, because it stated, according to news despatches, that Germany had made such economic progress that she is able to pay her standard quota under the Dawes Plan, cannot be definitely assessed until the full text is at hand. Even on the basis of the cablegrams, however, two important reservations must be pointed out. The first is that the German budget shows a deficit of some 600,000,000 marks, due, according to Mr. Gilbert, to increases of salary to public officials and large remittances from the government of the Reich to the several states. Mr. Gilbert thinks this deficit can be, and should be, repaired. But it is not demonstrated that it could be repaired without undue hardship to Germans or injury to Germany's economic condition. The second reservation is that cash transfers on reparation account have been made without depressing the exchange value of the mark solely because Germany has been borrowing enough abroad, and particularly in the United States, to counterbalance her sales of marks. She has no export surplus on which to fall back, if she should cease to import capital in such large quantities. Thus the transfer question is still as much unanswered as ever—unless we assume that Germany can and will continue to borrow abroad at the present rate for many years to come.

THE Senate debate over the Kellogg Treaty brought out all the weaknesses of that document. Its enemies exhausted every effort in the attempt to find something dangerous about it and were unable to do so; its friends, headed by Senator Borah, who must have found his role a strange one, admitted so many weaknesses that they were hard pressed to explain why they had bothered to bring the document forward for ratification. These weaknesses have repeatedly been pointed out in the pages of the New Republic, and need not be recited again. In spite of them, we still feel it is desirable that the treaty should be ratified by the United States and by the other powers. It is commonly assumed by hostile critics that the choice is between this treaty and a stronger one. On the contrary, it is for the present at least between this treaty and none. If we should now reject our own proposal, it will be many years before Europe will listen again to a suggestion of this character, emanating from American sources. Those who demand an alternative text of a more positive character forget that the wording of a treaty of this sort is of no importance. Everything depends upon the attitude of the powers behind it, and as a test of their dispositions, the Kellogg Treaty is quite as good as any other.

CONSTITUTIONAL government has been suspended in Jugoslavia, at any rate for the present. King Alexander has dissolved the parliament and assumed sole and complete control of the country. The king is far from being a Mussolini, or even a de Rivera, and it is not certain how long he will be able to keep the reins of power in his own hands.


LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Chief of Jugoslavia's internal troubles is the conflict between the Serbs and the Croats which came to a head seven months ago with the assassination of Stephen Radich, Croatian peasant leader and the strongest character in Jugoslavia's public life. Externally, the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes is beset by a sea of troubles chief of which is the hostility of Italy, which uses Albania as a spear-head aimed at Jugoslavia's heart. At the moment, relations between Belgrade and its neighbors are fairly serene, a fact which probably accounts for the flare-up in regard to internal matters. King Alexander might well pray for a threatening gesture from Mussolini; it would probably do more than anything else to consolidate the country behind him.

NEARLY ten years ago, at Saint-Germain-en-Laye, the United States affixed its signature to a number of agreements which attempted to reduce international rivalries on the continent of Africa and to improve the condition of its inhabitants. The first of these treaties revises the historic acts of Brussels and Berlin. It guarantees to the parties complete equality in matters of missionary rights and of trade. The second agreement prohibits the importation into Africa of "trade" spirits—cheap and injurious drinks prepared especially for native consumption. The first of these treaties the State Department finally transmitted to the Senate for approval in January, 1926. The second treaty was not transmitted until May, 1928. This long delay may be explained by the fear that any document connected with the Paris Peace Conference would meet with senatorial abuse. But apparently the Department now feels that bygones should be bygones. The Saint Germain conventions impose no concrete obligations upon the United States. On the other hand, their ratification would place under international guarantee the rights of American missionaries and traders in Africa; and what is more important, ratification would entitle us to be represented in the international conference on African affairs which will be held in 1931, at which important steps for the promotion of native welfare may be taken.

IN 1919 the United States also signed at Saint Germain a convention in regard to the traffic in arms. The purpose of this convention was to stop the sale of war arms to revolutionists and even to governments except under a licensing system. The State Department failed, however, to present the treaty to the Senate; and the other manufacturing powers thereupon declined to ratify. Following repeated communications from the League of Nations, we finally stated our objections to the Saint Germain convention in September, 1923. In an effort to meet these objections, the League called a special conference and asked the United States to participate. We agreed to do so, sending Mr. Theodore Burton and Minister Hugh Gibson as our delegates. On July 17, 1925, a new convention was signed embodying practically all of the American proposals. For some inexplicable reason the State Department did not send this treaty to the Senate until May, 1928, and the Senate has failed thus far to act—the treaty has not gone into effect. Is not this a shabby means of doing international business? Once ratified, the arms traffic convention will prevent American arms-manufacturers from selling war arms to revolutionists in China or in Mexico. In theory, revolutionists should have the right to revolt. In practice there have been a number of instances where foreign arms-manufacturers have fomented revolutions for the sake of private profit. This convention merely says that revolutions shall be purely domestic affairs and that they shall not be fomented from abroad.

THERE is a fourth convention now before the Senate, which stands on a somewhat different footing. This is the slavery convention which was drawn up by the League and signed by thirty-six governments at the last Assembly. Although the United States was not a party, it has been invited to accede, and the President has requested the Senate to ratify. The slavery convention provides for the progressive abolition of domestic slavery, and aims to restrict forced labor in all of the colonies of the world. While its terms are not as sweeping as we would wish, we believe that this convention should be ratified by the United States in order to give our support to the movement to make the trusteeship principle more and more effective in those regions whose inhabitants are not yet able to stand by themselves. There can only be one objection to these treaties. That is their association with the League of Nations. But this association is purely clerical—notice of accession to the slavery convention must be deposited with the Secretariat. While such an act would constitute a recognition of the League, the State Department has already recognized the existence of the League in a dozen ways. Nevertheless, despite the fact that the Department has signed half a dozen treaties negotiated under League auspices, the Senate has failed to give any League treaty its approval. This failure to act may have been due to the pressure of overwork, or to a latent hostility to Geneva. Whatever the reason may have been, the time for action cannot be further postponed if our constitutional system is not to become the laughing-stock of the world.

CONTINUED rumors of a merger between the United Gas Improvement Company (a Mellon interest) and the Electric Bond and Share Company (a Morgan interest) concern all the people of the North Atlantic seaboard, and particularly those of New York. The United Gas Improvement controls the chief operating companies in Philadelphia

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and New Jersey, is closely associated with the Mohawk-Hudson Company in central New York, and has affiliations in New England. The Mellon interests are also supposed to be substantially interested in Consolidated Gas in New York City. A linking up with the Electric Bond and Share would mean an important step toward financial inter-connection of all the important power companies from Conowingo in Delaware north to the Canadian boundary. Such a monopoly was forecast in the argument objecting to the merger of Consolidated Gas and Brooklyn Edison which the Public Committee on Power vainly attempted to submit to the Public Service Commission of New York. Several important questions would be involved in such a merger. Not the least of them would be, as the Committee pointed out, that it would so unify the distributing systems which might tap the proposed power development on the St. Lawrence, that even if the generating stations remained in public ownership, there would be only one bidder for their output, which could virtually make its own terms.

UNCERTAINTY as to Governor Roosevelt's attitude on the power problem thus is a matter of great concern. Apparently he has maintained Governor Smith's position sufficiently to rule out the development of the state's power rights by private interests on long-term leases. It is said that short-term leases would be out of the question, because their relative uncertainty would make it impossible for private companies to float the necessary securities. But it must not be assumed that development by a publicly owned power authority, as advocated by Mr. Smith, is the only alternative which Mr. Roosevelt is considering. It is hinted that he is playing with a compromise which would give the private companies a share in the ownership of the developing authority. No clear reason why this should be granted appears, unless it is to overcome the stubborn opposition of the Republican legislature to public ownership of the plants, and so facilitate early development. But the people of the state can afford to wait for a correct settlement of the issue; if the state remains firm, they have nothing to lose. More important still, what assurance is the new Governor going to have that the distribution of the state's power will not enhance private profits at the expense of the consumer? What is he going to substitute for the weak protection of commission regulation of rates? We shall await with keen interest the answers to these questions.

MR. EUGENE P. THACKREY of the New York World was a member of the party which accompanied Mr. Hoover on his famous good-will tour. In a despatch to his paper written the day after landing, Mr. Thackrey revealed the curious fact that all messages sent by newspaper men during the entire voyage were subject to censorship. George Barr Baker, a close friend of the President-elect and a member of the party, wielded the blue pencil. According to Mr. Thackrey, "many suggestions and deletions were made. . . . Suggestions for changes or deletions ranged from adjectives used to describe rough weather to entire despatches touching on South American situations. Correspondents were consulted before most changes were made, but in case of objection to the suggested change the toning down or deletion was made just the same." Mr. Thackrey is of the opinion that probably no news of any importance was withheld from the public because of this censorship, and we are inclined to agree with him. Mr. Hoover's trip created less news and more dull reading than anything we can remember. Nevertheless, the fact that the correspondents were muzzled, which must have been done with Mr. Hoover's consent if not at his instigation, reveals an ominous attitude toward freedom of speech on the part of the man who is to occupy the White House for the next four or eight years.

MR. W. J. SYLVESTER is an ambitious gentleman. He proposes to launch a propaganda campaign against public ownership and operation, of any and all kinds, of a magnitude which will make the most earnest efforts of the Power Trust seem like nothing at all. To this end, Sylvester has organized the Industrial Conservation Board, the purpose of which is to collect money from frightened business men who are still quaking in their boots over the eight-year-old bogey of Bolshevism, and spend this money in an attempt to communicate the same terror to the mass of the American people. This is to be done, according to an exposé of Sylvester's plans in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch by Paul Y. Anderson, through advertising and publicity, the issuance of a monthly magazine, the employing of public speakers, work in the schools and colleges, and the use of radio and movies. Mr. Sylvester will levy on business firms to the extent of one mill for each one hundred dollars of net income; one of his assistants told proudly how he sent back a ten-thousand dollar check from a Milwaukee magnate whose proper contribution should have been thirty thousand dollars.

SYLVESTER and his assistants explained to Anderson, rather ominously, that they expected to be able to bring the daily and weekly press into line through the influence of advertisers and the banks. As a beginning, the editors are to sign a questionnaire and say whether they do or do not approve of "Bolshevism"—*i. e.*, public enterprise. It is probably as well not to take this precious scheme too seriously; it appears to be nothing more than a rehash of the familiar plan to mulct the business man of some of his dollars and spend them liberally for advertising space. We regret to see, how-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ever, that on the advisory committee—as handsome an array of stuffed shirts as ever we saw—there appear the names of such public-utility men as Martin Insull, President of the Middle West Utilities Company and brother of Samuel Insull; James C. Kennedy, of the Central and Southwest Utilities Company of Dallas, and Russell H. Ballard of the Southern California Edison Company. After the revelations of the Federal Trade Commission regarding the Power Trust's attempt to buy up public opinion wholesale, we should have thought it behooved these gentry not to get mixed up with men of the Sylvester stamp, at least for the present.

THE latest episode in the war between the Cunard Line and the United States government was as brief as it was deplorable. As the Cunarder "Berengaria" was on the eve of sailing from New York, the Post Office Department suddenly announced that she would carry no mails unless they were especially addressed with the name of the ship. As not more than one person in two hundred takes the trouble to do this, it seems likely that the "Berengaria" would lose virtually all postal revenue. Her mail would have been transferred, not to an American ship but to the "Baltic," and would have been delayed at least two or three days. Protests poured in on Washington in such volume that the order was promptly rescinded, in time to let the "Berengaria" receive about half her usual allotment of mails. Thereupon post office officials tried to explain that the order had not been intended as discrimination against the Cunard Line but was issued because the "Berengaria" was a day late in reaching New York and it was expected (but without any inquiry being made) that she would also be late in sailing. This defense might have gone down better if it had not been accompanied by the statement that the British Post Office discriminated in the same way against the "Leviathan" at Christmas-time. If the British are discriminating against American ships, that is a suitable subject for negotiations between the two countries. It is not a reason for reprisals suddenly undertaken and then abandoned, at the moment when the U. S. Shipping Board is rather hysterically trying to drive the Cunard Line out of the New York-Havana passenger trade.

SOME weeks ago we reported the death of Lala Lajpat Rai, famous and well loved leader of India. We recorded at that time the belief among members of his family that his death had been caused by injuries received during a riotous demonstration against the Simon Commission. Recent information from India confirms the earlier reports. Two physicians who attended Lajpat Rai have both stated that his death was "hastened" by the blows he received from the police, when he was driven back through an opening in the barbed wire as the Simon Commission arrived at Lahore Station. One of the police officers has since been murdered, presumably as a reprisal for the death of Lajpat Rai. The loss of their beloved leader has inflamed the Nationalists, and will make a reasoned and orderly settlement of the whole Indian question far more difficult. The stupidity of the British officials in permitting violence to be used against a man like Lajpat Rai is on all fours with the stupidity which first permitted and then condoned the Dyer massacre.

RHODE ISLAND at long last is going to abolish property qualifications for voters, and make at least a gesture toward remedying the infamous rotten-borough system for which that state has always been noted. The legislature now in session has the job of making the necessary change in the statutes to conform with the three constitutional amendments ratified by the people last November. These amendments provide: first, for elimination of the clause in the constitution under which no person who has not paid a tax on at least $134 worth of property has been allowed to vote for a city council or upon expenditure of money in any city or town; second, for giving Providence a greater representation in the legislature; and, third, for biennial registration of voters instead of semi-annual. Heretofore Providence, with nearly half the state's population, has had the same number of senators—one—as the smallest fishing hamlet. This rotten-borough scheme was grafted anew on Little Rhody during the long rule of the notorious blind Boss Brayton. It will be remembered that the Dorr Rebellion of 1840 had for its aims reapportionment of representation and extension of the suffrage. But the state is still governed by the compromise constitution adopted at that time—1842. The proviso restricting the franchise to adult males possessing a freehold of the value of $134 dates back to an act of 1724. Thus after five years the long-drawn-out filibuster and "poison-gas" session of the Rhode Island senate in 1924 bears some fruit and justifies the tactics of the Democratic minority led by the then Governor Flinn and Lieutenant-Governor Felix Toupin.

THE government of Turkey is engaged in the ambitious experiment of trying to teach everybody to read and write. Beginning January 1, free public schools were opened and everyone between the ages of sixteen and sixty-five who could not show that he already knew his letters was required to attend. Some weeks ago the use of Arabic characters was abolished in favor of the Western European alphabet, slightly modified to fit the peculiarities of Turkish linguistics. The process of westernizing any oriental people is a laborious and sometimes dangerous one. King Amanullah of Afghanistan has found that out to his cost, the recent rebellion against him having been largely due to what his subjects regarded as his scandalous innovations.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# The Ethical Basis of Reparations

IT is a striking coincidence that just as plans are being made to revise the Dawes Plan and make a final settlement of German reparations, historical opinion on the origins of the War becomes, in the Allied countries and the United States, virtually definitive. Authorities differ as to the apportionment of responsibility, but they do not differ much as to important questions of fact, and the facts indicate, on almost any tenable basis of ethical judgment, that the Versailles verdict was mistaken in attributing sole guilt to Germany. This is, notably, the conclusion of the most scholarly of all the recent studies—that by Professor Sidney B. Fay. Yet the demands of the Allies for reparations have rested, ever since the War, upon this clause of the treaty.

No doubt much of the hesitation of politicians and practical men in accepting the revisionist position has been due to a fear of its possible effect on the reparations controversy. They have assumed that, if Germany were officially absolved of unique guilt, she could no longer be held to the payment of reparations. Yet reparations are necessary in the economic calculations not only of Belgium, but also of France and Great Britain—in the latter two cases, particularly, because of the war debts of these nations to the United States. But is this assumption well founded? What, as a matter of fact, would be the result of an officially accepted conclusion that the responsibility for the War does not rest upon Germany alone?

The nature of the position of historians like Professor Fay must not be misunderstood. They do not take the blame from Germany only to place it upon someone else. To assess precise responsibility is, as was pointed out in our issue of last week by Robert C. Binkley, to adopt a particular ethical method of judging comparative guilt, and there is no general agreement upon such methods. If it is absurd to say that Germany was solely responsible, it is even more absurd to say that Russia or France was. Nor is there any logical basis for a mathematical compromise. It is not now possible, and it never will be, to say that guilt rests upon the several nations in a ratio, for example, of Germany 3, Austria 3, Russia 2, France 1, Great Britain 1, on a scale of 10 for total causation. The revisionist position does not lead to the conclusion that, as long as Germany is not liable for the whole of the war damage, she is liable for none of it. And, furthermore, it does not give us any precise information, translatable into marks, francs, pounds or dollars, as to how much of the damage she ought to repay.

Where, then, does this leave the ethics of reparations? Each nation concerned in the War suffered great financial and economic losses, inseparable from raising armies, wasting human and natural resources in destructive weapons and munitions, pensioning soldiers and their families. It has never been seriously claimed since the end of the War, that the "guilty nation" should pay all such losses of the other nations. What she was supposed to repay was the damage caused by the operations of her armies and fleets outside her own borders. Raymond Leslie Buell has pointed out that Article 231 of the Versailles Treaty itself is capable of this interpretation. There has been, to be sure, acrimonious debate as to just what items of expense should be included in this damage, and as to how large it was, but at any rate it is a tangible category, which can be, and has been, dissociated from responsibility for all the losses of the War. Since this damage was inflicted chiefly on Belgian, French and Italian soil, and on the high seas, it would not be logical to say that, if war responsibility is divided, Germany should pay for none of it. Such a conclusion could follow only from a judgment that Belgium, France, Italy and the other Allies were solely responsible for the War, and were responsible in direct ratio to their relative losses. The ethical conclusion from the revelation of the revisionist historians should rather be that, while Germany ought not to pay for *all* of the damage, she ought to pay for *some* of it. How much of it she ought to pay, history gives us no hint.

Strangely enough, this theoretical exercise in ethics brings us precisely to the point which the economists and the practical men have reached in the attempt to collect reparations. With the adoption of the Dawes Plan itself, the pretense was given up that the Allies could collect from Germany, at least in the visible future, enough to pay for all the damage which they claimed had been caused. Now that there is to be an attempt to finish the job by fixing a total amount, and, if possible, enabling Germany to make a single cash settlement through floating an international loan, the reparations total must be definitively scaled down. The test will apparently be, not what Germany ought to pay, but what she can pay. The remainder has been, or will be, met by the Allied nations themselves.

A further and important change of attitude may, however, result from a world-wide recognition of the vague sharing of responsibility. So far, the reparation authorities appear to have been proceeding on the principle that, while the amount which can be obtained from Germany will necessarily be smaller than the total of the damage, still every last pfennig should be extracted from her which she can possibly transfer. But this has no necessary correspondence with actual guilt. The final sum decided upon may, on the ethics of guilt, be too large or too small. No one can tell; no one can ever tell. This being the case, would it not be well to limit the historical judgment strictly to the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

assumption that Germany should pay something, and proceed to the decision of how much that something ought to be on the basis of broad economic and political considerations which look to the future rather than to the past? Here are a group of nations which form a world community, which are already, economically, members of the same body, and which ought to be welded more closely together, for the good of all. What would be a wise sharing of the burden of damage, on the basis of the relative sacrifices which each can bear? What settlement would make the most easily healed scars? What one would disarrange least the channels of international trade and finance? What would leave the smallest occasion for trouble? We freely admit that this logic applies to the revision of the war debts to the United States as well as to the reparations from Germany. The ethics of past obligations, in both cases, lead us into a fog. The attempt to create an enduring world settlement provides a new and better ethic, which has a moral reality in the world of today. It is capable, under wise leadership, of dissolving the bitter preconceptions which have confused this area of international relations ever since 1919.

## A Victory for Arbitration

LAST Saturday the Pan-American Arbitration Conference came to a happy and successful end. Through its good offices, both Bolivia and Paraguay signed a protocol referring their difficulties to a commission of nine. Having averted a threatened war and impressed by the necessity of establishing permanent conciliation machinery, the Conference then proceeded to draft and sign two notable agreements. These agreements may be regarded as the first fruits of the anti-war pact; in one sense they may even be regarded as a result of Mr. Hughes' election as a World Court judge.

In these arbitration and conciliation agreements the American states promise to arbitrate all legal questions and to refer non-legal disputes to conciliation commissions. In the case of arbitration the parties agree to abide by the award; in the case of conciliation they are free to reject the recommendation of the conciliators. These principles have already been accepted by the United States and other nations. Nevertheless the treaties signed last Saturday mark an advance of great importance because they broaden the scope of arbitration and strengthen the machinery of conciliation. In other words, they establish a procedure through which these principles may be concretely applied.

Under the Root arbitration treaties, the parties are free to decide for themselves whether or not a question is legal and susceptible to arbitration. But under the present arbitration agreement, the parties agree that the legal questions which must be arbitrated include any question concerning the interpretation of a treaty, or of international law, the existence of any fact which if established would constitute a breach of an international obligation, and the nature and extent of the reparation to be made for the breach of an international obligation. All these questions must be arbitrated. This clause is patterned after the famous optional clause of the World Court statute. In fact both the arbitration and conciliation agreements seem to be based upon League experience.

While the scope of arbitration is important, the establishment of smoothly working arbitral machinery is more important still. The Pan-American Arbitration Conference failed to adopt the proposal so frequently made in the past to establish a Pan-American Court of Justice. Any such proposal involves insuperable difficulties in the election of judges, and it would lead to unnecessary duplication of the work of the World Court. The arbitration agreement merely provides that the tribunal to which a given dispute shall be referred shall be established by agreement of the parties. They may thus submit the case to the World Court, to judges drawn from the Hague panels, or to a special tribunal. In the absence of an agreement, the dispute is to be submitted to five arbitrators, two selected by each party, and the fifth selected by agreement.

When a dispute arises, both parties must draw up a special agreement defining the particular subject-matter of the dispute. This question has been particularly troublesome in the United States where such special agreement or *compromis* must be submitted to the Senate. This body thus has had the power to defeat the arbitration of a particular case, despite the previous acceptance of the obligation of general arbitration. The present treaty gets around such difficulties by providing that, if the parties cannot arrive at a *compromis* within three months, it shall be formulated by the Court.

Disputes which are not submitted to arbitration must be referred to conciliation. Here the Conference has merely revised the Gondra Convention signed at Santiago in 1923. This convention established two permanent committees, composed of diplomats, one at Montevideo and the other at Washington. The function of these committees was limited to receiving requests for the establishment of *ad hoc* commissions of inquiry to conciliate disputes which threatened to disturb the peace. In its recent dispute with Bolivia, Paraguay appealed to the permanent committee at Montevideo. But since the diplomatic committee has no power of conciliation, and since Bolivia declined to agree to establish an *ad hoc* commission, the system broke down. The conciliation agreement signed at Washington attempts to remedy this weakness. The two permanent diplomatic committees are still empowered to receive requests for the establishment of *ad hoc* commissions of inquiry. But when pacific relations are threatened, the diplomatic committee may itself take the initiative in bringing about peace,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

regardless of whether the *ad hoc* commission of inquiry is subsequently established. Under such a provision the diplomatic corps, or certain of its members, at Montevideo would have intervened upon its own initiative in the Port Vanguardia incident. As a result of the Washington convention, there will be two permanent conciliation committees for the American continent, one at Montevideo and one at Washington, together with *ad hoc* commissions, if the parties to the dispute desire that they be established.

While it is not possible to make reservations to the conciliation agreement, two types of dispute are excepted from the arbitration convention: domestic questions "not controlled by international law," and questions affecting states not parties to the convention. This recognition that certain domestic questions may be controlled by international law is of great importance. The terminology employed in these exceptions also marks a great advance over the clumsy wording employed in the American-French arbitration treaty of January, 1928. What is even more significant, the fear that the United States would reserve from arbitration questions affecting the Monroe Doctrine has not materialized. In a notable statement Mr. Hughes informed the conference that the United States would sign this treaty without any reservation.

Curiously enough, the Latin-American states have shown much less enthusiasm for the arbitration document than has the United States. At the last session of the conference thirteen governments affixed reservations to this agreement. While the text of these reservations has not been published, apparently they reserve from arbitration pending disputes and also pecuniary claims except in case of "denial of justice." No two lawyers can agree upon the definition of "denial of justice," and some Latin-American states decline to submit the question to an international tribunal. Most of the states are already bound to arbitrate pecuniary claims by a convention signed in 1910; and as Mr. Hughes pointed out, they remain bound by that convention whether or not they accept the 1929 agreement. The whole question of the protection of alien rights is involved in this controversy. Certainly if the United States can agree to entrust the protection of its vast economic interests abroad to arbitration tribunals, the Latin-American states should be willing to do so. The tables are now turned. The doctrine of unlimited and lawless sovereignty is supported, not by the United States but by Latin America. The lead in this nationalistic movement is being taken by Argentina, which declined to participate in the conference and which shows no signs generally of coöperating either in Pan-American affairs or in the League of Nations.

Mr. Hughes and Mr. Kellogg have now affixed their signatures to an agreement promising to refer to arbitration all legal questions—questions involving the interpretation of a treaty or of international law, questions in regard to the breach of international obligations. What does this mean? It means (provided always that the treaty is ratified) that the United States will submit to an international tribunal disputes with Panama over the interpretation of the Canal treaty of 1903 and disputes with Cuba and Haiti over the interpretation of the Platt amendment agreements. It means that future controversies over oil legislation will be submitted, not to the harangues of diplomacy, but to international courts of law. It means that, should the United States land troops in Santo Domingo, the Dominican government could charge that the United States had violated its obligations under the anti-war pact and that the United States would then be obliged to submit the question to arbitration, or at least to conciliation. If these two treaties are loyally carried out, they will mean the end of the intervention policy of the United States. They will mean a revolution in our Latin-American relations.

There is, however, a cloud on the horizon. The very breadth of these treaties will lead to protests from the Upper House on the Hill. The American Senate emasculated arbitration agreements of a much more limited scope in 1897, 1904, 1908 and 1911, and it made ferocious reservations to the World Court Statute only three years ago. The timidity of our foreign policy during the last ten years has been in part due to the State Department's fear of the Senate. But the State Department has come to fear the criticism of American public opinion more than that of the gentlemen on the Hill. It has resolved that the responsibility for jettisoning the development of American foreign policy shall be passed on to the Senate, a body supposedly moved by the popular will.

We salute Mr. Kellogg and Mr. Hughes for the signature of these agreements which in certain respects are more notable than the anti-war pact. We salute the forces of American opinion who have so vigorously demanded a change in our Latin-American policy—a change which now seems imminent. But we shall defer our salute of the American Senate until after these treaties are ratified.

THE NEW REPUBLIC

PUBLISHED WEEKLY AND COPYRIGHT, 1929, IN THE U. S., BY THE NEW REPUBLIC, INC., 421 WEST 21ST STREET, NEW YORK
HERBERT CROLY, PRESIDENT, DANIEL MEBANE, TREASURER

*EDITORS*

HERBERT CROLY BRUCE BLIVEN GEORGE SOULE
EDMUND WILSON STARK YOUNG R. M. LOVETT
T. S. MATTHEWS

*CONTRIBUTING EDITORS*

JANE ADDAMS JOHN DEWEY WALDO FRANK
ALVIN JOHNSON E. C. LINDEMAN ROBERT LITTELL
LEWIS MUMFORD GILBERT SELDES R. G. TUGWELL
LEO WOLMAN

RATES: SINGLE COPIES, FIFTEEN CENTS; YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION, FIVE DOLLARS; CANADIAN, FIVE DOLLARS AND FIFTY CENTS; FOREIGN, SIX DOLLARS; THREE MONTHS' TRIAL, ONE DOLLAR

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# British Labor in 1929

THE Labor party confronts the possibilities of 1929 in a situation that has had no parallel in any preceding epoch. I am writing in the midst of a singularly quiet period, and amid circumstances that make it impossible to venture upon a forecast. But there are certain features of the record and the outlook about which, I think, no serious differences of opinion are to be noted; and, as the political Labor party during the coming year will have to make decisions of the greatest importance, it is worth while for American readers to have an understanding of what is happening.

There are two things needing to be said at the outset. The first is, that for two years we have been living within the shadow of the great strikes of 1926. The second is that, during the whole of 1928, the labor movement, whether mistakenly or not, has been under the influence of the belief that in the near, perhaps the very near, future, Labor is destined to be again in office, and in office with a parliamentary majority. It is not easy to understand why the rank and file should have moved so decidedly into this stage of assurance as to what is in store for the party; but the fact is unmistakably as I give it. For some time past there has been an air of confidence over the whole body, and people of all sorts who attended the fall conference in Birmingham went back to their places impressed by the fact itself and by the behavior of the leaders and the lesser men, which implied—so it was said—a plain determination to be ready for the event.

Let us see, however, to begin with, how matters stand on the industrial side and in reference to the labor unions. The year 1926 was calamitous. It is true that in the end we may look upon it as marking a division between two stages of industrialism in England, as providing a fresh start, and, therefore, containing a positive good as well as evil. But, judged by immediate results, the year stands mainly for disaster. The general strike was a blunder in strategy and tactics. It accomplished less than nothing for labor; it worked out, on the whole, as the employers and the government die-hards hoped it would. The events of the nine days of May, 1926, served to emphasize the gulf between political labor and the trade unions, and, still more, to show up the peculiar isolation in which the coal-miners live. Looking back two years, I think we should be pretty well agreed that, at the beginning of 1926, the Labor party and the unions ought to have shaped their policy in relation to one thing above all—the plight of the miners and the necessity of reaching some kind of pacific solution of the coal problem. The general strike was not made by the union leaders; it was made by the die-hards in the Cabinet. But the general strike was ended by the union leaders: ended, as they foolishly believed, with better terms assured to the miners; ended, as the miners found to their bitter cost, in such a fashion that they were left to continue their struggle for another half-year in the certainty of final defeat.

The miners' fight, coupled with the distress in the old heavy industries, brought financial ruin upon the labor unions. Beginning afresh in 1927, they found themselves loaded with mortgages and overdrafts, and, I think it must be added, with a general conviction that the strike weapon had been broken in their hands. Certainly, there was not, and is not today, a single important labor union in the country that would support a strike policy.

We may say, therefore, that, as the more or less definite result of the most cruel experience through which the workers of England have passed during half a century, three main tendencies are to be observed: (1) a condition of anger and despair among the miners, after more than twelve months of stagnation and suffering following the long stoppage; (2) a growing recognition among the "old heavies" that as regards the four industries upon which the supremacy of England was based (cotton, wool, iron and steel, shipbuilding), the balance of power in the world has changed to the disadvantage of Britain, and (3) that labor-union leadership must face the facts and strive toward the attainment of an understanding with capital and the working out of a method of coöperation and joint control.

The most striking demonstration of the new mind of labor came at the first of the two important fall conferences, that of the Trade Union Congress at Swansea. There, beyond all dispute, the conservative, the anti-Cook, section was in command. There was only one question under discussion that greatly interested the outside public. That was the question whether a majority would be given to the executive council which, for some months, had been engaged in negotiations with Alfred Mond (now known as Lord Melchett) on the subject of a definite policy of coöperation between the great employers and the unions. The result at Swansea was never in doubt. The plan, which in the year of the general strike would have seemed merely fantastic, was approved by a decisive majority.

If this decision seems, as, of course, it must to the followers of A. J. Cook, the miner's leader in 1926, like a selling of the pass, we should keep in mind that the leaders of the labor movement look upon it merely as a necessary stage in an evolutionary process that is, to them, as inevitable as anything can be. They recognize that the fighting

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

strength of labor has, in the past eight years, been very greatly reduced. They are, moreover, in my judgment, much nearer nowadays to the general program of the American Federation of Labor than they have ever been before. That is to say, they realize that in this age of neo-technic industry the notion of warfare between the worker and the power which owns the machine is crude and self-destructive. But, above all, they favor the method of negotiation and coöperation because they are convinced that, in the stage we are rapidly approaching, the governing part of the control of industry must rest with associated labor. This is in the consciousness of the union leaders. It leads them—stimulated, of course, by their acute awareness of conditions in industry and in the unions—to accept the Mond plan. But I do not say that among the rank and file of organized labor in England there is any great belief in the possibilities of Mondism, or any enthusiastic approval of the activity of the council of the Trade Union Council, as led by newer men such as Citrine and old-timers such as Ben Turner of Yorkshire. The organized workers in general, I should say, have felt merely that their unions are going through a bad spell; their funds are exhausted and their membership is greatly diminished. And, therefore, since an aggressive policy of any kind is obviously out of the question, things may just as well go as they can.

As regards the miners, something of a definite character has lately been happening, though it is very different, probably, from what it has been in the minds of their leaders. Twelve months ago I was in the northeastern coal area, among the mines of Durham and Northumberland. The conditions I witnessed there were indescribable. They were, indeed, far less raw than those that I found last winter in the Pittsburgh section; but perhaps for that very reason they were even more depressing. I did not believe then that the mining community could stand another year of want and stagnation; but they have done it. The government in the interval has not moved; and at the present stage whatever is being done is in the hands of private people and voluntary associations.

In the shockingly distressed area of South Wales, which happens to be the one with which public sympathy is most concerned, the workers for the Society of Friends, who have been doing far more than any other agency, have, I believe, come to the conclusion that there is nothing for it but a large scheme of migration, since the great majority of the miners will not go back to the pits: the Rhondda Valley will never again provide work for them. But how is migration possible? There is, however, one hopeful, though small, enterprise on foot: the creation of a trust under the direction of a group of public men of high standing, for the opening and working of certain mines on a coöperative non-profit-earning basis. But even if this should succeed, it will make almost no impression on the great need.

And one other move is a direct copying of a method adopted after the War in relation to the devastated regions of France: namely, the adoption, for relief purposes, of some distressed area in the coal fields by each one of the towns in the more prosperous parts of England. This is obviously a method of relief capable of large development; and it has the positive advantage of distributing among the well-to-do classes direct knowledge of the distress conditions. In order to raise funds, the charitable people will spread as many dismal facts as possible; and as there is no such complication as always arises, with the Churches and other organizations, in a time of strike, we may anticipate that the people of England after a few more months will be much better informed as to the miseries of their fellows in the mining counties than they have ever been. The plan, incidentally, may have the effect of stirring the government to action.

I come now to the political aspect. Why should Labor be so thoroughly confident about its position after the general election, which will come in the spring, and what are the prospects of some kind of understanding between the Liberal and Labor parties if, after all, the Conservatives should still be the largest party in the House?

As to the hopes of a definite Labor victory, there is, I believe, a difference between the general expectation and the estimates made by the party leaders. The Liberals have been putting out propaganda designed to show that the Labor party has not been winning at the by-elections, and that, no matter how favorably things were to go for them, they could not hope to make such gains in the national election as would give them half the membership of the Commons. With this estimate I find myself in general agreement, and it is, I understand, not seriously disputed at Labor headquarters. Labor, of course, will hold its own in the industrial sections. It may even have a greatly increased vote.

The Liberals will put a large and strong body of candidates into the field, so that in the majority of the constituencies there will be a three-cornered contest. In the non-industrial districts that will tend usually in favor of the government candidate; in not a few places in the Midlands and the North it may tell in favor of Labor. It is impossible to make any guess as to what the Liberals can do. They will have the men. These will be backed by a large campaign fund, which will, however, be vulnerable because attached to the name of Lloyd George and denounced as a private fund. But it would be well to keep in mind that the Conservatives intend to make the election turn on the tariff. They call it safeguarding, but it is the same thing. This will help the Liberals. They can always fight a tariff election effectively: their men are well primed, and the Tory-protectionists seldom understand their own game. The Labor party is divided on the tariff, and the majority of their candidates will not care about defending the free-trade position. All this adds to the uncertainties of the year, and, on the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

whole, I should say, it increases the likelihood of an indecisive result.

When Parliament meets after the election, neither the Tories nor Labor may have a majority; the Liberals, of course, cannot possibly come near it. But if, as in 1924, when MacDonald took office, the Liberals hold the balance of power, what is the likelihood of the compact of that year being repeated and Ramsay MacDonald again becoming Prime Minister, with the general support of the Liberals? That is the question which, for reasons that are sufficiently obvious, English people are asking nowadays.

There is at least one thing about which everyone is agreed. Labor and Liberal will go into the campaign to fight one another. It is idle to talk of compromise or arrangement before the battle: both sides are determined to find out how they stand with the electorate. This being so, the contest between Liberal and Labor will be keener than it was four years ago; and since on the whole the Liberals are in a mood of depression as to their chances of recovery in the country, it is likely enough that the fight between the two parties now in opposition will be exceptionally bitter. This, of course, makes no sort of preparation for overtures of coöperation should the government be beaten. Mr. Baldwin, if defeated, would not resign. He would meet Parliament in the summer and face the vote of censure. Then would come the maneuvering, which would be much more complicated than it was when Asquith, as Liberal leader, decided, on constitutional grounds, that his party must vote to put Labor in office. As Liberal leader after the election, with probably a party of sixty or seventy in the House, Lloyd George would be in a much more difficult position than Asquith was. His followers would be against a general agreement, and a good part of them would be more inclined for making terms with Stanley Baldwin. The majority, in any case, being fresh from the conflict with Labor in the constituencies, would want a definite bargain with MacDonald and his colleagues before voting with them to turn the government out.

Let us suppose that no such bargain were made and that Labor, as seems likely enough, numbered considerably less than half the House. The Liberals would be split: for there is always a section of the old Liberal party which cannot bring itself to support a Tory government. Lloyd George cannot control his very small party in the present House. Certain of his nominal followers hold their seats with the aid of Tory votes. He will have more difficulty in making a united party in the next House. This portends a curious dilemma. Certain prominent publicists on the Liberal side are constantly saying that, if or when the split comes, two-thirds of those who vote Liberal today would go over to Labor. That is most certainly not so. Liberal members in the House would be faced with the necessity of making a choice which to most of them would be repulsive. But one thing seems indisputable: we should not see a Labor government, representing a minority of the House, being kept in office by the votes of a Liberal party which had unconditionally surrendered its position.

What the upshot will be no one today can predict, for the simple reason that no one can make any forecast about the election that would be worth putting down on paper. The prospect in England is far more dubious than was the prospect in the United States on November 1, 1928, because the possibility of a decisive victory seems to be ruled out. Moreover, we have an enlarged electorate that is more problematical than yours was: for it will contain five millions of women voters who have not hitherto had the right to vote in any kind of election. For ten years our ruling classes have kept the young women of England outside the entire sphere of political responsibility. If at the next national election they are given a sharp jolt, nobody will be surprised and few will have much pity for them.

S. K. RATCLIFFE.

*London.*

## Man

Man, twisted so with loves and hates,
In crooked mirrors contemplates
The autumnal ecstasies of leaves,
The beatings of a wing, the seas.
With mind he thinks his own he preaches,
Times oceans to his pulse, and teaches
Thunders to shudder in a string.

In the wide world everything
He knots into his flesh with words,
And cannot loose again. In cords
Of rhyme he thinks to capture motion,
And in a syllable's commotion
Entangle Death.

He never dreams
That the full land, the hills, the streams
Possess him, not he them: for they
Encompass him and take their way
Along his bones, and cruelly start
Fires in the valleys of his heart,
Wait in his brain, ready to spring
To a moment of remembering.

And when he writes how dawn is sweet,
Or water cool under his feet,
Not he, but they, do write it down.

Oh, man is but the world's clown,
And any blade of dewy grass,
Trees shimmering in the sun like glass
Can bring him to a dance, or tears.
A dark cloud can, around his ears,
Bring philosophic roofs to dust.
And dust itself so conquers man
That he lies last where he began.

HAROLD LEWIS COOK.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# Who Should Go to College?

IN HIS BOOK, "College or Kindergarten," Dean Max McConn of Lehigh University discusses the problems of the liberal college in a way which cannot be ignored. Though its theme is old and much-considered, the book is fresh and startling. Mr. McConn has been for many years a dean, and one gathers from his book that he has taken with keenness and zest the joys which a deanship offers. It is fine fun to be a dean. Except for the teaching of philosophy I know nothing in a college, and nothing outside a college either, which is so thrilling in its human contacts and opportunities. All about him the dean sees young people fashioning and fixing the molds in which they are to live. Whether they know it or not they are making their choices, their irrevocable choices, as to the character and quality of all their later experience. And the dean's task is just to watch those choices and to counsel with young people about them as they make them. "What do you intend?" "Where are you going?" Those are the questions he is always asking. And my guess is that, if he asks them clearly and with the right background of understanding, he is doing one of the best things that a teacher can do.

Mr. McConn, may I repeat, seems very much alive to his opportunities. His book is—may I repeat this also—fresh. He is not wedded to routine. He is willing to smash machinery. And when he projects new procedures to take the place of the old, one still has the sense that his eye is on the student and his learning and his living rather than on the instruments which are supposed to serve them. Chiefly for this reason I hope that the book will be widely read by the very many people who are just now discussing the successes and failures of the liberal college.

But, on the other hand, Mr. McConn's book seems to me to fall distinctly within the literature of escape. It is really a study in day-dreaming. In place of ideas it gives us yearnings—the yearnings of one who has found the daily routine, in spite of its pleasantness, so baffling and unsatisfying in its achievement that he seeks consolation in that happy world of fancy in which we might live if only dreams would come true.

The reader of the book will have no difficulty in finding the ground for Mr. McConn's discouragement. As a dean he has been in close touch with the American undergraduate. And he sees that the colleges of liberal education are not giving to that young person much liberal education. Only 2 percent of our youth go to such colleges. And of those who go he estimates that three-fourths are so devoid of intellectual activity that the attempt to stir them to study and investigation is foredoomed to failure. Further, the remaining fourth—the one-half of 1 percent who have in them the making of scholars—these are, he thinks, sadly neglected and ill-treated because the college is devoting its energies to the impossible attempt to teach those who will not learn.

I do not think that anyone who knows the facts can seriously challenge Mr. McConn's description of the situation. The intellectual achievement of our liberal colleges in the teaching of young Americans is scanty in amount and low in quality. The temptation to discouragement is, for one who loves and believes in learning, vast and overwhelming. But the question is: What attitude shall the teacher take as he finds himself thus facing a task which baffles and defeats him? Mr. McConn's reaction is, I am sure, not the worst possible. Some of us, in his situation, give up the fight. We say that young Americans cannot be taught. And so we turn to research or to something else—as the justification of our existence. Mr. McConn does better than this. He is still hoping and planning even though it be for a world of dreams. He is still determined to accomplish something in the cause of teaching even though he runs away from the actual situation to get it done. And yet his attitude is not good enough. The plain fact is that our colleges are commissioned to educate our youth. They must meet the responsibility of that task. No other single enterprise in our common life is so important. And in the face of that enterprise Mr. McConn makes, I think, a quite disastrous mistake in judgment. He thinks that we have already really made the attempt and have failed. As against that conclusion I am sure that we have not yet really begun. Our American scheme of liberal education is still in its most crude and vague beginnings. Far from having made the attempt, we have as yet hardly entered upon the formulating of what the venture is to be. The present time is one, not of endings, but of beginnings in liberal education.

Mr. McConn's way of dealing with the educational situation is simple and direct. Ninety-eight percent of our youth, he says, do not go to colleges of liberal teaching. And apparently he is content that this should be so. Excepting the possibility that some few may be diverted from professional to liberal studies, the 98 percent are consigned to various forms of vocational and lower-grade training. For the remaining 2 percent he proposes two different colleges: the Gentleman's College and the Scholar's College. The former is to take care of the "superkindergartners," the 1½ percent of our youth who are financially able to go to college, but who do not care to study. The latter is to devote itself to the chosen few, the one-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

half of 1 percent who have zest and capacity for learning. It is out of these and their happy teachers that Mr. McConn proposes to make his intellectual paradise on earth. It is this paradise which he chiefly delights in planning. Of it he says, "That is what we should have; and, though I am no longer as young as I was, I would give ten years of my remaining portion for the privilege of being a teacher, or even a dean, for one year with such a group."

No one who likes the favorite academic sport of reforming the college can fail to enjoy Mr. McConn's shrewd and lively portrayal of the various features of his ideal institution. He decides what shall be taught and how it shall be taught. He approves coeducation and questions intercollegiate athletics. He finds the work of the teacher falling apart into very different tasks which require different trainings and different capacities; he would therefore arrange divisions of labor, letting one man lecture, another quiz, another do research, and so on. He discusses trustees and plants and deals gently, but firmly, with both of these extraneous necessities. At all points his suggestions are stimulating. If one might express a general opinion, it would be that his insight is that of the dean rather than that of the scholar or teacher. He is strongest and surest in arranging for personal and administrative matters.

But after all, it is the negative side of Mr. McConn's argument, rather than the positive, which will attract attention. I am afraid that his Gentleman's College is far more interesting and significant in principle than is his Scholar's College. As we have seen, he finds cluttering up the present academic community a majority of pleasant young people, the "superkindergartners," who go to a place of study not in order to study, but because there is no other satisfying place to which they may go. Mr. McConn proposes to get rid of them by providing such another place. And he will attract them thither by appealing directly to their interests. Speaking of such activities as playing games, managing teams, giving plays and concerts and dances, he says: "These activities, I repeat, should constitute in themselves the chief educational instrument, the essential curriculum, in the college for superkindergartners—in what I have previously called the Gentleman's College." And he adds: "Not that I would bar studies entirely from the Gentleman's College. The gentlemen themselves would not desire this. . . . The essential thing is to abandon the idea and pretense that this aspect of their training is fundamental and of predominant importance. . . . Once this clear fact is accepted, studies will no longer be allowed to interfere with activities. . . . "

Here we have the element in Mr. McConn's argument which seems to me really significant. He has come to the conclusion that 99½ percent of our young people are incapable of liberal understanding. He finds that human nature and capacity, or rather American nature and capacity, are such that in only one-half of 1 percent can we hope to build up the activities of intelligence and reflection. I cannot help taking a particular interest in this phase of his argument, because at this point he singles me out as his antagonist. I should like therefore to take this opportunity of discussing with him what seems to both of us to be a very fundamental issue. It would give me much satisfaction if I could argue the case with the fairness and good temper with which Mr. McConn does his fighting.

The difference between Mr. McConn and me is, as he states it, quite terrifying. Our common question is, "How many people can be liberally educated?" His answer is, "One-half of 1 percent." But he finds me saying, "100 percent." The divergence could not be much greater without pushing one or the other of us out of the picture altogether. If we are not to seem like two extreme dogmatists, playing fast and loose with common and familiar facts, some explanation of the divergence must be found.

I am glad to discover, therefore, that the difference between us is not just as Mr. McConn has seen it. When he quotes me as saying that "all normal persons are capable of understanding," he is taking words from a longer sentence which reads: "Our scheme of government, our scheme of morals, *our scheme of social relations, is built, or thinks* itself built, upon the view that all normal persons are capable of understanding." This statement surely does not sustain Mr. McConn's interpretation of my meaning, nor, so far as I know, does any other statement which I have ever written. And only a few sentences away, I was saying, with respect to the same point, "Now it will not do to approach this issue with mere dogmatism. It will not do to oppose dogma with dogma, to declare that all people are as such capable of worthwhile activity in the field of ideas." Here is, I think, the real difference between Mr. McConn and me. He knows how many people can be liberally educated. I do not. He is ready to say that 99½ percent of our youth may be put aside as we set up the agencies of higher liberal education. I am saying that nobody knows as yet to how many minds liberal teaching may be profitably extended. As I understand the democratic program in education, I am eager to go on with it. Mr. McConn is convinced that we had better give it up. Instead of limiting the opportunities of higher liberal education to 2 percent of our youth, I want to find out how nearly we can attain to making them available for all our people. Mr. McConn, having abandoned 98 percent, finds it a slight additional infraction of the democratic principle to consign 75 percent of the remainder to the College for Gentlemen. The difference between us is quite serious enough.

It would not be fair to Mr. McConn to give the impression that his conclusion is mere dogma. In support of it he offers two kinds of evidence, one drawn from the experience of failure in high school

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and college, the other taken from the results of the mental tests. For fifty years, he tells us, we have been trying to educate the superkindergartners, and now the evidence of failure is complete and final. Prior to 1870, he says, under the economic conditions of the time, only the scholarly boys were sent to college. In those, the good old days, the college was a place of learning, of genuine study and scholarship. But during the last fifty years, economic prosperity has poured in upon us an increasing flood of young barbarians whose coming has little, if any, relation to learning. High school and college have tried in vain to educate them and now, after fifty years of disappointment and failure, we know that the work simply cannot be done.

Mr. McConn does not develop the argument based upon the mental tests. He says of it simply that "the more precise, more scientific findings" of the testers "merely confirm the empirical results attained by the method of trial and error in both the colleges and the People's Colleges."

If I, too, may deal with the tests in summary fashion, I should say that, whatever they prove or disprove, they do not give adequate justification for Mr. McConn's despair. Unquestionably they confirm and sharpen the impression of the teacher that human individuals differ from one another over a vast range of mental capacities and achievements. But the chasm which separates the one-half of 1 percent from all the others they do not reveal, nor, if it were suggested, would their evidence give it confirmation.

But the real question is, What does the teacher's experience of the last fifty years tell us? And I am sure that Mr. McConn's conclusion is not justified by his evidence. He tells us that a vast wave of material prosperity has been pouring in upon us a flood of externally-minded young barbarians. And we, who advocate reflection and study, have been quite unable to convert the heathen, to enlighten the barbarians. But why? Are these young people barbarians as such, congenitally incapable of intelligence? Or does the wave of material prosperity which sends them sprawling about us also account for the peculiar state of externalism and crudity in which they arrive? And does the same wave of external success come dashing over us, the teachers, blocking our efforts, enfeebling our activities? As I have said before, it avails nothing to choose between these alternatives by mere *a priori* dogma. The issue must be put to the test of actual trial in actual cases. And in this situation a few typical cases closely studied are worth pages of statistics dealing with unanalyzed conditions. We must take young barbarians, drag them in some way out of the rush of external influence, and if possible open their eyes to the state in which they and their fellows have been, as contrasted with the qualities of life which are open to them if they escape the current madness. In such an attempt one success is more convincing than a thousand failures, because it does not take many successes to destroy the myth of the barbarian as such. And if that illusion disappears we can then go on with what has always been the task of the teacher in the midst of a material civilization, namely, that of rescuing the young from the achievements of the old. All of us, teachers included, are as yet too much under the spell of our industrial success to think very clearly as to how that teaching is to be done. But it will never do to draw back before we have begun. A successful people must always be saved from its achievements. From that task its teachers may never draw back defeated.

But this brings me at last to what is, I think, the essential mistake in Mr. McConn's educational outlook. And it is one in which he is not alone. The mistake is that he takes the pupil for granted as something fixed and given. Apparently for him the combination of zest and capacity for study is something which a young person has or has not, essentially and eternally. If he has it you can teach him. If it is lacking, then nothing intellectual can be done for him. But on both sides of this statement Mr. McConn seems to me wrong. I am not sure that all those who love to study can be liberally educated. And I am quite certain that many young people who have not cared for learning can be brought to pursue it with eagerness and profit. As to the first point, I have the impression that if Mr. McConn should ever realize his dream, should ever find himself surrounded by some hundreds of young intellectual enthusiasts, he would not be quite so happy as he anticipates. Persons who study simply because they like it may very well like to study things which, under the circumstances, are not really worth studying. Certainly we are today aware of the eager activities of hosts of specialists who are not liberally educated, who are in fact often hostile and destructive to the cause of genuine understanding. And this reveals on its negative side what seems to me the fundamental principle of all education, *viz.*, that it must be based not simply on a natural inclination to study, but on a reasoned conviction of the value and necessity of study.

The same principle is in conflict with Mr. McConn's statement on the other side of its meaning. In such a civilization as ours the primary task of the teacher is not to find zest and capacity already developed, but to build them up where they are so generally lacking. The American teacher who regards himself as simply furthering mental activities already in operation is, I think, practically negligible in our social scheme. He must himself, first of all, see the need of learning, of liberal study. He must then set himself to the task of making Americans, young and old, share in the same perception, the same reasoned conviction. They must realize that, whether they like it or not, whether it is easy or hard, the way of intelligence must be followed. Only upon such a foundation of deliberate and serious purpose can a system of education

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

be established. To try to build a scheme of teaching upon the natural inclinations and aptitudes of the uneducated is like the putting of a heavy structure on shifting sands. Personally, I am not willing to say to any American boy as yet, "Be a Superkindergartner." I think that we should have a try at every one of them before giving them up to intellectual barbarism and damnation. But the great need is that teachers should have something to say which is strong enough to have an effect upon the heathen, significant enough to convert the barbarian. Only as such a reasoned conviction develops among us can we build up a system of education. Only as it becomes powerful will our teaching have any chance of success. In the practical absence of such a conviction it is idle to speak of our having failed in the attempt at general education. Our American teaching activities have as yet hardly begun.

ALEXANDER MEIKLEJOHN.

# The Decline of Ownership

WITH increasing frequency European economists are citing American experience as an example of the development and entrenchment of capitalism, and we ourselves commonly remark that there is less danger of communism in the United States than in any other country of the world. But the very acceptance and reiteration of the statement carries a challenge. With the front door so definitely barred, may there not be side doors through which the essential spirit of communism may enter?

The bulwark of our present prosperity has consisted in the activity in our building and automobile industries. Both these industries have owed their expansion to an extension of credit so general that the change in degree has become a change in essence. An increasing proportion of our population lives in houses and rides in cars which nominally are owned, but the word "own" has lost its sharp definition.

At the present time a person can "buy" a house for virtually no down payment and continue to pay interminable instalments at practically the same rate as rent. Who really owns the house? Through various ramifications the money ultimately comes out of savings institutions, which means the resources of the general mass of the people. Thousands of these houses are allowed to revert to their former ownership, with no heartrending regrets, and the "tragedy" of mortgage foreclosure has been relegated to the melodrama of a past generation. So, too, with cars, many of which are not paid for until they are ready to be scrapped. Likewise furniture—prominently the davenport suite now being foisted upon the country, built to last only until the final payment is made—with household equipment, phonographs, radios and even clothes. Once we bought things. Now the term "buy" has been modified to a less definite method of acquisition. *Instead of things we are getting the use of things.*

This shift in emphasis from things to service is a commonplace of advertising, which is the keenest barometer we have of the attitude of mind of both producer and consumer. A small percentage of exclusive articles is sold for possession, but the mass of goods today are sold not as things to be owned but as instruments of service. The salesman who sells a motor talks not of initial cost, but of cost per mile, and the man who comes to your door with a broom gives you the price in terms of cost per month of service. Prices themselves are changing from solid figures to cost per unit of use. It is carefully planned sales psychology, directed at a public whose viewpoint toward ownership has undergone a fundamental shift.

A generation ago no one would have believed that credit would be extended in the widespread fashion and in the considerable amounts which are now a matter of daily practice. We should have referred to such a condition as approaching the millennium of faith and good feeling. Possession in those days commonly meant a bleak self-denial, possession was colored with an unlovely self-righteousness. The objects acquired became of value chiefly as evidence of denial of natural desires. To have made acquisition less back-breaking would have been considered immoral.

We have passed from these stern virtues to a materialistic age. We have things, we want things, and we enjoy them, frankly; sometimes vulgarly and ostentatiously. It might be interesting to consider how much this is a subconscious revolt against the worship of things, not for themselves or for their usefulness, but as symbols of the puritanical virtues of thrift and denial. At any rate our relationship to things has changed profoundly. In place of the virtue of denial we are taking a frank pleasure in possession. It may be materialistic but at least we are stripping possession of much of its rigidity and ugliness.

In a generation the aspect of our cities has changed. Our architecture reflects in stone an unarticulated realization that many possessions are mere burdens, too heavy for the individual to carry. Families which would have considered it beneath their dignity a generation ago not to maintain a pretentious home have moved into hotels or apartments. The quarters they occupy are simplified, with the possibility of using on occasion reception and dining-rooms more elaborate than those they had in their

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

former houses. They entertain in a public ballroom, with no aristocratic shudder to think that the room may be rented the next evening to someone else. They are abdicating possession in order to gain use.

The club-houses which are springing up all over the country, whose building operations have shot up into the forefront of our national statistics, are serving the function of taking the burden of social activities out of the individual home. Membership may carry an aristocratic flavor, but the steady process goes on of building up community facilities and minimizing the need of individual possessions. With their thousands of members and their fees within the reach of the bulk of the population, these clubs have passed beyond the assumption of acquaintanceship, beyond the range of any special groups, halfway toward community projects.

With restricted living space the ownership of books is yielding place to patronage of circulating libraries, and this fee service is growing much more rapidly than the free service of public libraries. People quite able to purchase books are renting them to escape the burden of ownership. The public is willing to pay, but in its new desire for freedom and under the conditions of living it is choosing to pay for the use of things rather than be burdened with possession. The same movement has started in connection with pictures and other works of art. Some of our libraries now loan reproductions of paintings. Chicago has instituted a system of circulating originals on a yearly fee basis which suggests enormous possibilities. Among the group of persons who know current values there is a steady flow of possession in etchings, paintings and other objects of art, partly for the educational value of knowing by association a wider range of subjects and partly to overcome the sense of restriction in city quarters by frequently changing the decorative content of those quarters. Much of modern painting has an interesting and stimulating character which suggests temporary rather than permanent ownership, and the establishment of a system of circulating modern works of art has been prophesied by several dealers as a logical outgrowth of present-day conditions.

The fashion in antique furniture has wiped out the stigma of the word "second-hand," and with the increased manufacture of copies of antique design the successive and temporary ownership of furniture has become fairly common. In offices it is not unusual to exchange the typewriters and other office machinery each year for new ones, reducing the status of ownership to that of use only. The towel supply has virtually abolished the individual ownership of towels throughout offices and business establishments, and restaurants and hotels are ceasing to own their own linen, finding it simpler to buy service rather than goods. The window cleaners provide their own equipment, the household cleaners come with their own vacuum cleaners and other tools, and the caterer brings his own silver and linen. It is probably only a matter of a short time before city dwellers at least will buy service from laundries and not attempt to own their own sheets and pillowcases.

To come down to the very personal possession of clothes, some laundries now guarantee a certain minimum of washings for collars, which is only a step to furnishing service, when a man will no longer own his own shirts and collars, but will pay for so many changes a week. Certain brands of hose are sold under guarantee of a minimum length of service, which alters the nature of ownership. In the matter of women's clothes, certain current expressions indicate that the sense of appropriateness is coloring the sense of possession. "This is yours," we say, or "This is not yours," with no meaning of legal ownership. A slang expression, of course, but an indication of a widespread feeling that use is one of the elements of ownership. For a long time masquerade, dress, riding and other special sports clothes have been rentable and these services are being extended and are now used, not apologetically, but frankly as a modern space- and money-saving convenience. In many communities the clothes of the rich are being renewed to their pristine freshness and sold, not to the charity group which can make no proper use of them, but to middle-class women whose grandmothers would have been horrified at the suggestion of purchasing second-hand clothing, who regarded garments as intimate possessions and not as their granddaughters do, as articles of temporary use.

In our habit of placing black or white labels upon human institutions we lose sight of the fact that one condition grades into another by imperceptible degrees. We think, for instance, of human slavery and human freedom in terms of black and white without realizing that private property in human life was a matter of a thousand shades of gray. We forget that slavery in the North faded out as economic conditions changed, that slavery in the British West Indies was abolished by gradual process, that in the Spanish colony of Porto Rico where the natural flow of conditions was allowed to operate, the edict of emancipation in 1873 found nine-tenths of the colored population already freed.

It is by no means impossible that the black and white of communism and capitalism may not shade into each other by imperceptible degrees. The idea of the forcible confiscation of private property and its conversion to general use is abhorrent to the American mind, and the attempt to bring about such a change suddenly would undoubtedly lead to a civil war more bitter than the war which grew out of the threatened confiscation of private property in slaves. The fact that we engaged in a ruinous civil war in order to settle one problem of private property challenges us to meet with intelligence our changing relationship to property in things, and vastly more important than the steps which are

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

marked by laws is the background psychology showing itself in our daily relationships.

To gain the freedom and efficiency which are the vaunted goals of our civilization, we are slowly but surely exchanging the burdens of possession for service. Voluntarily, of course, and as a logical and intelligent development of our capitalistic system. We reject with asperity the vague doctrine of the brotherhood of man and the contention that every human being as such has a right to his share in the fullness of earth, but we hail the soundness of the capitalistic doctrine of the development of the domestic market which asks in the interest of mass production that each one of our 115,000,000 citizens be regarded in a new light as a purchaser and consumer and be given the respect and the wages which will enable him to function in this new capacity. And when this and other present-day tendencies have been permitted to develop a few steps farther, we may discover that the undesirable alien whom we have barred from entrance by the front door has come in at the side to argue with us the meaning of some of the sacred words of our economic faith.

VALESKA BARI.

# Leaving the Farm

IN THESE years of the McNary-Haugen Bill we hear much of the sad condition of the farmer caught between the high domestic market where he must buy and the low world market where he must sell. There also suffers along with him the less considered "hired man."

Agriculture, which in America had always before occupied more persons than any other occupation, dropped to second place in the 1920 census, giving way to manufacturing and mechanical industries. In the last hundred years the percentage of the population over ten years of age engaged in agriculture has steadily declined, though the absolute number has increased. But from 1910 to 1920 even the absolute number decreased. Exactly what this decrease was it is difficult to tell. The census figures make it about 1,700,000 persons, but the census itself says that part of this was due to overenumeration in 1910 and underenumeration in 1920. P. K. Whelpton of the Scripps Foundation has estimated the correct figure as around 800,000. Moreover, recent data indicate that there was as great a decrease from 1920 to 1925 as during the ten years preceding.

Who are these people—at least a million and a half of them—who have left the farms during the last fifteen years or so? The number of farmers, that is, those who manage their own land or rented property, has increased a couple of hundred thousand in the last census decade. The decrease in the total is among those who work on the farms without having a proprietary interest in them: the hired men and the children of the farmers, between whom the group of farm laborers is divided about equally. It is impossible to tell how many of those who have left the farm were hired men and how many farmers' sons who went to seek their fortunes in the big cities. Probably they have gone from both groups. The interesting thing is to find out why.

The answer is the status of the two million "hired men" whom the 1920 census found still on the farms. In ability and training they are comparable with unskilled or semi-skilled industrial workers. What is their economic status in comparison? The Department of Agriculture has compiled wage figures for farm workers from 1910 to 1927. Their wages have, of course, increased in this period, but how much has been clear gain? The National Bureau of Economic Research estimates the value of the dollar to the farm laborer as distinct from other working men, though the difference is slight. According to them the 1913 dollar was worth fifty-one cents to him in 1920 and sixty-four cents in 1921. So in terms of 1913 when his average weekly wage was $8.88, his real wage rose to $10.29 in 1920 and dropped to $8.33 in 1921.

How has his wage increased compared with that of other unskilled male workers? From 1914 to 1924 it rose 70 percent. Figures compiled by the National Industrial Conference Board show that all but two manufacturing industries (hosiery and knit goods, and paint and varnish) increased more than this, and many a great deal more, even 150 percent. That is, manufacturing has been becoming more attractive economically to the unskilled worker, while agriculture offers about what it did before the War.

Let us compare the farm worker's absolute wage with that of the unskilled laborer in manufacturing. Government figures on the latter are available for 1924, 1925, or 1926. The figures for these years for agricultural laborers (where board is not furnished) are $14.64, $14.76, and $14.94 respectively. That is more than $2 less than for the lowest paid of other laborers, railroad track workers, and $14 less than motor vehicle manufacturing, which is the best paid exclusive of mining.

So the unattached young men are leaving the farms, where they suffer from the effects of agricultural depression without the farmer's advantage of independence. The farmer himself tends to remain, because farm property isn't selling very well, so it means a sacrifice to sell or rent it. And to add to his troubles he finds he can't get the kind of hired men he used to. Only those too old, or too dull, or too unambitious to break into industry, are left. And he can't afford to pay enough to get better help. We are told that the farmer is so badly off because he is inefficient. One reason for that is the type of labor he can command. So the old merry-go-round is on! Low profits mean low wages mean low profits!

MARJORIE MCFARLAND.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# Washington Notes

AT THIS particular moment—a day or so before the scheduled arrival in Washington of Good-Will Herbert and his large, varied and undeniably dull entourage, reportorial, secretarial, diplomatic and unavoidable—the outlook is unquestionably for a very sour week indeed—that is, if it is viewed from the angle of the incoming administration. For an outsider, however, without present political ties, with no notion of contracting future political ties, and no political purpose of any sort to serve—if there are any such in Washington, which I very much doubt—Herbert's stay in the capital promises to be an extremely interesting week and one not wholly devoid of gaiety and humor. For instance, beyond doubt it will be interesting to see how Herbert, who for six weeks and more has been getting far more good news than by rights ought to come to any single individual in that limit of time, and who has been daily buttered with fair words and loaded with friendly gestures, reacts to bad news and bitterness. Because, unless all signs fail and I miss my guess completely, that is about all Herbert will get here during the six or seven days he proposes to stay.

Actually, as I contemplate the dose now being prepared for the President-elect, my heart goes out to the poor man. He is not going to have a happy time at all. His carefree days are over. All he will get from now on is the worst of it. Even the weather will probably be bad. Seriously speaking, however, the length of time Mr. Hoover has been away, his success in cutting off political contact, the complete lack of information as to what is really in his mighty mind, together with the utter lack of guidance from the White House, and the feebleness and futility of House and Senate leadership combined, have created a more bad-tempered Washington situation than ought normally to exist at this period. Complaints have accumulated and bewilderment prevails. An unusually large number of persons eagerly await the coming of the President-elect for the sole purpose of pouring their personal grievances into his ear, urging that he settle this or that situation, pointing out to him the dangers here and there. He will, I think, get a large and amazing variety of bad news in a remarkably short time, and, so far as I am aware, no good news at all. If anyone in Washington is awaiting Mr. Hoover for the purpose of telling him anything pleasant, he is keeping himself well concealed.

Among the minor matters which will be taken up with Herbert as soon as he arrives here will be the sad case of Dr. Hubert Work, the industrious, if sometimes misguided, Chairman of the National Committee, whose aspirations were lightly dwelt upon in this place last week. I know at least four Republican Senators and as many members of the House who are in a feverish state of excitement over the mere suggestion that Dr. Work will have to pass upon the political availability of minor applications for federal jobs, and who are grimly determined to tell Herbert at the earliest opportunity—and fully—their objections to Dr. Work's playing any such role. And, of course, the tactical blunder which Dr. Work committed in letting the newspapers picture him as having in Mrs. Hert, Vice-Chairman of his committee and a very well meaning lady indeed, a woman candidate for Mr. Hoover's Cabinet, has added to the hostile feeling toward the unfortunate Doctor and strengthened the case against him. I expect, by the time Herbert really does go to Miami, Dr. Work's enemies in, around and about this unsympathetic and soulless center of political intrigue and activity will have cut the good Doctor down to considerably less than half-portion.

Then there is the special-session situation. Herbert will find some of his warmest friends in Congress—or at least warmed-over friends—who are violently opposed to the extra session in the spring, insisting either upon having the farm bill passed at this session or putting it off until fall. On the other hand, Mr. Borah, who unquestionably was his friend, strongly favors a special session and demands that it be called not later than April. Of course, Herbert wants no special session—who would in his place? None the less he will call one, and call it early too. There is no possible way, so far as I can see, to avoid it, no earthly excuse for thinking Herbert is silly enough to try. He is not only pledged in such a way as to make escape impossible, but there is every reason to believe he long ago made up his mind on the subject. Yet he will be subjected to a great deal of unpleasant pressure from wholly insincere though plausible fellows to prevent an early call.

Another species of bad news which will be poured into the Hoover ear, I am told, are the objections to his young Irish Catholic friend, the Hon. Bill Donovan. I think Mr. Hoover wants to appoint the Hon. Bill, and I personally think he would be perhaps as good an Attorney General as he can find. However, there is considerable senatorial opposition to the Hon. Bill, and it is by no means confined to the two Democratic Montana Senators—Wheeler and Walsh—who practically foam at the mouth when the Donovan name is mentioned and threaten all sorts of things in the way of refusing to confirm him which they could by no means bring about unaided. I am informed that they will have aid, and from Republicans. I am told—and believe—that certain Republican Senators in whose states the Klan is large and upon whom it can bring pressure are preparing to protest to Mr. Hoover about Colonel Donovan, not, of course, because of his religion, though that will be their objection at bottom, but because he is not "acceptable to the drys." That "not acceptable to the drys" is to be the cloak used by Klan or Klan-influenced Senators in their anti-Donovan drive. How far it will get with Hoover it is hard to say. My own idea is that he will see through the cloak to what is behind, and that, of course, will make the Donovan appointment inevitable.

Another little matter which several people want to take up with Herbert—and will—is the threatened deficit in the Treasury, made almost certain now by the excess of congressional appropriations over the budget provisions. There are some who will privately and very confidentially argue with Herbert that the thing to do is to drop the aged Mr. Mellon, with his developing deficit and his Treasury mistakes so baldly exposed to the naked eye. There is undoubtedly an undercurrent of opposition to the old gentleman, and it would be very much stronger if it

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

were not for the incredible awe and uncanny apprehensions created in so many timid souls by the mere possession of such vast wealth. It is my opinion, however, that Mr. Mellon will stay, at least for a while. It is infinitely easier for Herbert to let him hang on for a year or so. He will, I am fairly sure, keep Mr. Mellon—it is not necessary to re-appoint him—but that does not mean the aged Andrew would voluntarily be the Hoover choice. It merely means that the situation makes it expedient. It means that Hoover will hold him on, hoping he will not stay longer than a year. There is no secret about the personal relations between Hoover and Mellon. Mr. Hoover, it is easy to recall, was Mr. Mellon's fifth choice for the presidential nomination. He favored Coolidge and Hughes and Governor Fisher and several others, and he came out for Hoover only at the last minute and after Hoover had his fight won. As for Mr. Hoover, Mr. Mellon is certainly not better than his fifth or sixth choice for Secretary of the Treasury. He can probably think of twenty or thirty men he would prefer in that place. Yet such is the glamor and the legend surrounding the Pittsburgh Crœsus that he will probably be estimating Treasury figures with his eyes shut, and getting them all wrong, at least until 1930.

There is not, I am afraid, space enough here to touch upon some other of the varieties of bad news which will be supplied poor Herbert on his brief visit here. One of his trials will certainly be the renewed and inevitable conferences with the "corps of correspondents," recently referred to by one of themselves as "ambassadors of the people"—and not laughingly either, which shows just how completely atrophied the sense of humor has become under the Coolidge regime. A good many of the "ambassadors of the people" are in a hostile frame of mind toward Herbert, and for several reasons. One is the notion that as President he will have about him a small group of preferred newspaper writers who are personal friends but none too popular with their colleagues. Another, so I am told, is the idea of having to deal during the Hoover administration with one or more of the super-press agents who write sweet magazine articles and soggy poetry and are among the "original" Hoover men. Some of these even I will concede are hard to bear. And there are other reasons, I hear, for the truculent feeling among the correspondents. Not the most trivial is that the bulk of them not only were personally in favor of Mr. A. Emanuel Smith, but were so extremely enthusiastic as to convince themselves, in the face of every basic fact, that he was going to be elected. It seems ridiculous, but it is the truth. The net result of all this is that the relations between Herbert and the press representatives in Washington are not at this time happy. They may straighten out and I believe will, after he becomes President, but right now there is nothing like that sweet accord which has so consistently prevailed between Mr. Coolidge and his Washington newspaper "friends"—and personally I hope, for the sake of the President, the sake of the correspondents and the sake of the country, there never will be. It was sickening stuff all around, and the results were bad.

T. R. B.

Washington.

# The Kingdom of God

*The Kingdom of God, by G. Martinez Sierra. Translated by Helen and Harley Granville Barker. Ethel Barrymore Theater, December 17, 1928.*

THE first act of "The Kingdom of God" opens in the garden of the old palace of the Duke of Torre Blanca, now converted into an asylum for old men. We see the two old men with their pride, their boasting and quarreling, their resentments and policies, their love of drunkenness when a peseta comes their way; and then the young sisters of St. Vincent de Paul, with their heavy basket of potatoes. One of these is Sister Gracia, the daughter of a Minister, the granddaughter of a Marquis; she has given up her home and the pleasures of society for this work with the maimed and halt of the world, she desires to enter so far as she may in this life into the kingdom of God. We see the Mother Superior, then Sister Gracia's parents, her father and mother and sister; her mother pleads with her to give up this consorting with disgusting creatures and to come home to the career she was born to—in the order of St. Vincent de Paul the vow is taken yearly and does not bind for life. Liborio comes shivering in, an old black man from Cuba, and we see the young girl—she is nineteen—how she humors him as if he were a child and invents thoughts to comfort him. Her parents leave Sister Gracia there in this retreat, with the sisters, and with these old men who are the ashes, the end, the comedy and irony and foolish pathos of human life and who to Sister Gracia are like her dolls, her father, the play of her gentle, tender heart.

In the second act we are in the patio of a maternity home, for women who "have come to grief." There is the girl at the fountain, washing clothes and mocking, her child has died; the girl whose betrayal has made her so bitter that her baby is nothing to her; and the dumb young mother who fears everyone but Sister Gracia and the doctor. Then Quica appears, her fourth visit to the institution, which she finds agreeable enough, with people to nurse you and feed you and all that; she has spent four years and six months here free and had a thousand pesetas out of them to boot; lovers and betrayals, babies and sisters, do nothing to her loving zest. The point of this scene, so far as concerns Sister Gracia, is the way in which this agony of life around her is tearing her heart, and the culmination arrives with Enrique, the doctor, who loves her and begs her to renounce this calling and marry him; there would be plenty to do as his wife. But she will not leave this work of God's, to Whom she has given her love. The end of the scene finds her trembling before the renunciation of this human happiness, and entreating the Mother Superior to write and get her transferred. Today, at once, she would like to leave, it is a case of conscience.

In the Orphanage, where the third act takes place, there is a shortage of food, the board mismanages, cheats, pulls wires; and in the midst of these difficulties, so worldly and squalid, and among her orphans, with their fighting, clandestine love affairs, riots and bullyings, Sister Gracia, now an old woman of seventy, supporting herself with a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

stick against her rheumatism, but crafty and wise, sweet, gentle, witty, full of the irritability of her infirmities, full of humor, complete in her own soul, rules. She lives in God, but she and the Saviour have little time to talk to each other now, the paternosters must wait on hungry mouths within her walls, evil-doers without, busy hours, quick, watchful eyes. One of her old boys, Juan de Dios, comes in from his first bull fight, which he has fought for nothing, but has won; next Sunday he will get a thousand pesetas. He brings the bull's ear to her. The crowd is waiting for him at the gate; he begs Sister Gracia to come that far with him, so that they may see them together.

There is a riot then about the bad stew, for which there are no peppers. Felipe, one of the orphans, leads the rebellion. The boys plan to go out and sack, they will break open doors and take what they need. Felipe makes a revolutionary speech, after the manner of firebrands everywhere. The boys rise from their seats and start for the town as Sister Gracia returns to face them. She sends them all back to the table, and speaks to them. Do they think they are the only hungry people in the world? There are those poorer still, without mattresses to lie on, without a crust to eat. Men break God's laws, they devour each other, but God does not smile on the wrongs of the world, he endures it, for how long, who knows? All that we can do is to try to make the world good. And that we can do not by hate but by love. What they have suffered here, of hunger and injustice, they can remember afterward and seek to put suffering and wrong out of life, by love, by laws. They must promise her that when they are gone and are among men they will spend their blood to the last drop that children may not be forsaken any more, and no more mothers be wronged and go hungry and be ashamed to carry their children in their arms. The orphans promise, repeating her words after her, and now, with supper over, she sends them off to bed, to sleep in peace.

The boys go slowly out, only Felipe remains, sitting on his bench, his head buried in his hands, crying. Sister Gracia goes to him and puts a hand upon his shoulder; he must not cry, men don't cry. They suffer, but they work and hope.

The very fact that such substance is made into a play at all is a part of the foreignness of "The Kingdom of God"; and it is necessary to give this rather long account, however shallow and unsatisfactory, to make this fact clear, and to show also how the drama in this work of Sierra's comes about. In the kind of modern plays we know best, plays Northern or Nordic in their quality and mind, such a story of a woman as this in "The Kingdom of God" would turn more on her inward state, her changes of mind, her development and growth through her experience. But in this Latin piece it is the background itself that carries the drama along. We see first the young girl working among the shreds of life in these old men; then as a woman confronted with the needs of her own body and soul, and with the problem of how life comes into the world, how it comes through the pain of others, how urgent it is and innocent and unceasing, how it cannot be denied; and finally as an old woman surrounded by the life that lies between birth and age, the promise of life opening in these boys and girls, to whom she gives her wisdom, strong rule, humor and love. The theme of her is not inward, introspective, psychological in our familiar sense, but is set against the whole idea of woman the mother, the bosom of life, the love that mediates between harsh law and human needs, which the world of the Mediterranean understands so easily and has turned into the Madonna, the divine mother. Sister Gracia rests for her significance not on her individuality but on her eternity; and she derives her permanence from the need life has of her, moment by moment.

The play is foreign, too, is Latin, in the way the characters are put in, their strong outlining, the typicality of their self-revelation, and their habit of generalizing and running off into philosophic statement anywhere and everywhere. And most of all it is Latin in a particular respect that is difficult for us to understand and that misleads us constantly with regard to the depth of Latin art, I mean the manner in which the subtlety is achieved by a certain combination of single simple things instead of by some single complexity. When this method comes off supremely, as in the scene of the young bull-fighter and the old Sister Gracia, we cannot see just what has been done but feel that the sum of these simple motives that make up the scene is one of the most beautiful and moving moments in all the modern theater.

The difficulties of such foreign art as this appear, as we might expect, at many points in the production, honest though it is and conceived with genuine devotion to this play that is so full of vitality and variety and meaning. Actors who might be good enough as our native American characters and types find themselves straining at these Spanish parts, which, as they became more American and natural, would become less suited to their Spanish *milieu*, and as they became less American and natural would cease to be anything at all. Mr. Harry Plimmer's old Trajano and Miss Georgia Harvey's capital Quica, the erring, repetitive and canny, are the best of these character performances, and the Felipe, a fine part, of Mr. Elisha Cook, Jr., is very good. Mr. McKay Morris plays Enrique the doctor and Sister Gracia's suitor, a brief but cardinal role in the structure of the theme, with dignity and intelligence. The sisters and Mother Superiors in this production have the usual trouble in such roles: their strength and modesty needs to be more simple and offhand; it is easy to believe that nuns might be like that if you put them on the stage in front of an audience, but that is not what we are supposed to be doing.

The leading figure in "The Kingdom of God" is a hard one for our actors because of its peculiar combination of delicate gradations, strong markings, force and tender, human simplicity, and its exhibition of natural emotions playing so freely within such clear and definite conceptions and patterns of thought. Miss Ethel Barrymore distorts the theme and the portrait of her Sister Gracia by the strenuousness she gets into her last scene, that with the rioting boys. She should not make a sermon out of her lines, reducing the children to tears by such exhorting and delivery. No, what Sister Gracia says is the flower of her being, the gentle, strong music of her life and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

work and love; it is not these sentiments—all platitudes in their way—that quiet and bless the souls of the children, but their truth through her. Miss Barrymore's first act is fair enough, bluntly visualized but with its own goodness and beauty. Her second act, in which the love motive is secured in the drama, is admirably played.

Mr. Watson Barratt's three settings have not distinction, but they are done at least *con amore* and show a real observation of the Spanish scenes.

"The Kingdom of God" was first produced in 1915, in Barcelona.

STARK YOUNG.

# Jimmie Is Exhubilant

JIMMIE DURANTE looks a little like Marsden Hartley and a little like the burlesque creation of the East Side Jew, and is of Italian descent on both sides. He is an *improvisatore,* and no matter how deeply his material takes on the bright color of Broadway, he remains one of the Italian masters of vaudeville with an irreproachable genealogy leading back to Harlequin and the Venetian comedy. With his two companions, Clayton and Jackson, he has for several years provided the best entertainment in New York.

Their career is against all the traditions, for they seem to have had no reputation before they began as night-club entertainers; they proceeded, last season, to a brief and tumultuously successful appearance in vaudeville; and are in the near future to be offered in a musical show. They rebuke butter-and-egg men who interfere with the pleasure of others while their act is on, and turn from tired intellectuals who insist upon certain acts, if the atmosphere on a given night is not favorable. For several years they have been praised in the press—Walter Winchell and Robert Benchley, as I recall it, were their first critics—and yet they remain incorruptibly themselves.

Their entertainment is verbal slapstick and hokum, burlesque, parody, old jokes, and throwing hats; in whatever they do the rhythm of their movement gives the special character. Durante was the leader of a jazz band and played the piano, ruefully looking back on the years when he never appeared and spoke to the public; the other two are expert singers and dancers, and they all work together in the easy rhythm which Durante sets. Almost all their speech is shouting or half-whispered asides; they are always moving things or throwing things; they kid the piece, themselves, and the audience unceasingly. A girl takes the floor and sings with a French accent, "Allo sweetie, 'ow arre you?" and just as the dullest spectator begins to take her seriously, Durante appears and shakes his head mournfully; the act is undermined; he proceeds to build it up with a merciless coaching on how to get hot, how to put it over, where to walk, when to clasp the hands. The girl proceeds and Jackson is conveyed diagonally across the floor in a wheel chair. "A patient going to a sanitarium," Clayton announces through the song. A moment later the wheel chair reappears. "The scene is twenty years later," says the announcer. "The patient is now leaving the sanitarium."

Jimmie sings "I know very well I can do without Broadway, but can Broadway do without me," telling how he substituted for Jolson on one occasion and sank down on one knee—only one, mind you—and when he finished the Mammy song, Shubert said to him, "Throw in the other knee and Jolson *goes.*" The orchestra rises with a great derisive shout; Jimmie slams his cane on the piano lid; the orchestra rises again twining a heavy rope and pretending to be the Volga Boatmen; Jimmie throws his hat into the horn. Jimmie and one of his companions sit on a packing case with two canes in front of them representing a fire. "It's terribly cold outside tonight." "Why don't you close the door?" "Will that make it any warmer outside?" A great handful of sheet music torn into scraps is thrown against Jimmie's head, dislodging his hat. He picks it up and begins dictating a letter to the boys back on Broadway. After each wise crack the gust of snow comes down on him until the floor is littered. While the attendants are clearing, Jimmie brings on Benneh, the lavatory boy, and helps him do imitations of Frisco and Ted Lewis. A few minutes later the trio is singing "Did you ever have the feeling that you had to stay And still you had the feeling that you had to go," with Jimmie staying and going in mock dramatics. If he finally has to go he returns presently as Jimmie the Well Dressed Man, announced as a Study in Black and White; if he decides to stay you have the epic of Daniel, the Mowin' Fool. (Mow is pronounced to rhyme with cow.)

Daniel is probably the single act which concentrates most of the quality of Durante and his two collaborators. It consists of a series of stanzas with tag lines running from good to very good—most of them have passed into the common form of Broadway and some may have originated there. The prologue informs you that Daniel held the monopoly on mowin' and if you wanted a thing mowed you went to Daniel and if he said, "Mow it," it was *mowed.* Daniel is then reported to have got on a street car with a little child and refused to pay fare for him, because he was only three years old. "He looks more like twelve." "Can I help it if Yossel worries?" Daniel, a week after the death of his wife, was caught kissing his stenographer: "In my grief do I know what I'm doing?" And so on. The verses are shouted and acted out, with tremendous gusto, the excellence of the joke, or lack of it, being inconsiderable when compared with the fury of its delivery. And after each stanza the trio arises and marches up and down the floor chanting:

> But there's one thing you have to say for Daniel:
> Fair or foul
> Foul or fair!
> Fair or foul
> Foul or fair!
> He was a mowin' fool, that Daniel!

After that anything can happen and nearly everything does; the entire orchestra becomes temporarily an instrument of percussion, the trio commits assault and battery, Jimmie exits laughingly to return a moment later and explain that the exit is no good and to ask the orchestra to play him another, or the three men line up, each with a walking stick and begin to tell jokes, make puns, or kid each other, the point in every instance being that at the climax each one throws his stick to another, the sticks crossing in mid-air.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Running through these lunatic set pieces is a steady improvisation on current events on Broadway which somehow manages to be not brittle and to carry something of Durante's enormous good humor and kindliness. It is expressed in Broadway slang for the most part, but Durante has Harlequin's passion for words, which he picks out of the air and transforms to his own purposes. When he announces that Jimmie is exhubilant, the night promises well. The same acts may be performed, but they will differ in detail; it is only when the audience is too rowdy that the acts are played as written; on good nights the prelude to the shipwreck (with an obligatory victim to throw to the sharks) may lead to the interior decorating song (of which the entire point is that someone wants yellow curtains).

The freshness of Durante's attack and the enormous vitality of himself and his companions are rare qualities in the stuffy atmosphere of the night clubs. Except for the clubs which exploited a notorious personality, most of the entertainment offered in the past few years has been bits of vaudeville, perhaps vulgarized a little. The Parody Club, with these three entertainers, usually had six little dancers and a vocalist to fill in while the boys rested; the difference between the Durante acts and the others went beyond a difference in talent, for his acts were genuinely night-club, assuming an intimacy with the audience and a certain level of good humor (natural or superinduced externally—their club is not a speakeasy) and a community of understanding. Their personal jokes, for instance, are addressed to people who patronize the theater; their tone is proper to a lighter entertainment than the theater from which their patrons have come half an hour earlier. The whole thing lives on the assumption that Broadway is really sophisticated and really gay.

As a whole, Broadway is not. If it were, Durante's slapstick and hokum would be somewhat sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought, appealing to those weary of more refined humor. He chooses to play his slapstick straight, for gaiety, and his appeal to sophistication is in the quick stabs at burlesque which run through everything he does. The trained, informed intellect has no part in his work; he has only an instinct for gentle mockery and a natural sense of decency which gives him salvation from the hard gibes and the meanness of most of Broadway's cracks. His technique runs counter to the fixed rhythms, the mechanical perfection of Broadway's shows, having a personal and always variable cadence so that you can never be sure where his emphasis is going to fall and only be sure that whatever he does, of the unexpected or the banal, will be exactly right. GILBERT SELDES.

# *CORRESPONDENCE*

## Dewey's Russian Analysis

SIR: Your correspondent, George Olshausen, seems gratified to find that John Dewey's analysis of conditions and tendencies in Russia, in your columns recently, is somewhat similar to Spengler's synthesis. But this was an analysis, limited, and not a synthesis. And why Spengler? Why not Ouspensky, or Smuts, or Keyserling, or even Plato? Or—well, anyone could name a whole column of those who possess and therefore express the same human, not merely national or parochial, spirit.

Dewey, it seems to me, found what he took with him, himself, a new religion, in short, the spirit of the age—a development of himself and this age, and visible, materialized in Russia, though not only in Russia. Your correspondent, on the other hand, found only himself and a totally inadequate and misleading synthesis.

Here we are in the midst of a world revolution—a transition period, an age of unreason, of self and social negation. On the one side are roughly America, Britain, France and Germany; the four great states of the money power, and of its, in effect, private and irresponsible control; a control, in turn, not only of the people's credit (*i. e.*, money), and now patently aiming at a world's control and financial exploitation, but a control as well of government as a whole. At the same time, born of this spirit of the existing order or disorder, and expressed in its loyalties and patriotism, the policy of these states as such continues the *laissez-faire*, utilitarian, and uncontrolled pursuit of individual gain which, at the same time, is denied in the religion, morals, ethics of the peoples concerned. And the whole thing is based on "duty," but, as I have shown, on duty *sans* responsibility. So that in the last analysis no one is responsible, neither leaders nor led; neither those who impose and define these "duties" nor those who, in duty bound, mechanically, loyally, patriotically, blindly, obediently, and without any sense of responsibility, respond.

On the other hand, opposed to all this, to this system and therefore to these four states as such, and not only in Russia, is the spirit of the age.

Look abroad. This spirit is evidenced by Lenin in Russia, Gandhi in India, Mussolini in Italy, Sun Yat-sen in China, de Valera in Ireland, Kemal Pasha in Turkey, etc., all miracle workers, each in his own way and environment; all alike, however, expressing essentially the same creative spirit, and all alike opposed to the existing system.

In every country, moreover, minorities are to be found in revolt against the same mechanical, dehumanizing thing; a projection which no one possessing any sense of personal and social responsibility can accept.

Here in Canada, for example, opposed, with the foregoing, to the existing system and disorders of society, an organization exists positively to supersede what in effect, in all these states, is private and irresponsible control, by social and responsible control, and specifically of the people's money and the people's government. In our opinion, there never has been, and never can be, a real democracy without democratic, *i. e.*, rank and file, control together with (not under) aristocratic direction and administration. Nor are we frightened of words. Leaders' control must go. Honored and highly technical and imaginative social service is needed instead—instead of careerists.

At least this is a larger whole, nearer to reality, than that suggested by your correspondent.

Victoria, B. C. A. G. CRAFTER.

## Conscription and Democracy

SIR: The position of Mr. J. Leslie Brierly, of Oxford, England, as shown by his letter in defense of military conscription, published in the New Republic for December 12, 1928, is paralleled in this country by advocates of our state militia. They cite Jefferson and others. Civil liberty on the Continent seems to have suffered no less under conscription than civil liberties in America under professional armies. It may be that all we can expect in Europe is a shortening of the term in universal military service. But our goal must be to prepare for peace through the greatest possible restriction on militarism. Universal military training has been the backbone of the military system since Napoleon indirectly forced conscription on Germany by the terms he imposed. When we train boys to play a certain game they tend to live it later as opportunities arise. Lloyd George has warned us that international peace depends on our ability to hold down military preparations. Your position on the reservist question in the Franco-British naval agreement seems well founded.

ROLLAND BRADLEY.

Houston, Texas.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# Yeats's Guide to the Soul

*A Vision, by W. B. Yeats. London: T. Werner Laurie. 256 pages.*

MR. W. B. YEATS has now finally published his "system"—that work on the human mind of which rumors have occasionally reached us and to which he has sometimes referred us in his writings for the fuller explanation of his symbolism. The book has as yet been published only in a limited edition; but it will no doubt eventually appear, like those of Yeats's other writings which have first been brought out in this way, in a more easily accessible form. In any case, it may be of interest to describe, in so far as that is possible, a work to which, though Yeats's admirers may find it disappointing, the writer himself apparently attaches so much importance.

"A Vision" is presented, then, as "an explanation of life" purporting to be "founded upon the writings of Giraldus and upon certain doctrines attributed to Kusta Ben Luka." The "system" is introduced by an imaginary character of Yeats's, familiar to the readers of his early short stories and his poems, Owen Aherne, who tells how another imaginary character of Yeats's, Michael Robartes, discovered in the course of his wanderings the doctrines of the two philosophers—which turned out strangely to coincide—and brought them to Yeats's attention. Giraldus is described as a seventeenth-century writer in Latin, the author of a book entitled, in what appears to be singularly bad Latin, "Speculum Angelorum et Hominorum"; and Kusta Ben Luka, the author of "The Way of the Soul Between Sun and Moon," is supposed to have been a "Christian Philosopher at the Court of Harun Al-Raschid."

The legend, in regard to this latter, the Christian Philosopher, is that "a Caliph who reigned after the death of Harun Al-Raschid discovered one of his companions climbing the wall that encircled the garden of his favorite slave, and because he had believed this companion entirely devoted to his interests, gave himself up to astonishment. After much consideration, he offered a large sum of money to any man who could explain human nature so completely that he should never be astonished again." The philosopher, Kusta Ben Luka, presented himself before the Caliph and expounded the system which follows.

Now it should in the beginning be understood, in connection with "A Vision," which is likely to prove rather puzzling, not only by reason of its complexity, but also because one may be perplexed as to precisely how far Yeats himself intends us to take it seriously—that it belongs to a class of compositions rather rare in modern literature of which Poe's "Eureka" is perhaps the readiest example. One notes a tendency in contemporary criticism to dismiss "Eureka" contemptuously, as if it were to be judged as a contribution to professional scientific and philosophical thought. But Poe, for all his feverish excitement about it, did not intend it so: he called "Eureka" a "prose poem." And so with this "Vision" of Yeats's, which he surrounds with mystifications, if we would extract from it such truth as it contains, we must regard it, for all its abstract language and its geometrical diagrams, as primarily the production of a poet. Yet is Yeats really attempting, in a sense, to eat his cake and have it, too? Would he be glad to have us take him at face value and swallow him entire, at the same time that, if we were inclined to laugh at him, he has protected himself with a device for passing the whole thing off as a fantasy? In "A Vision," he seems alternately to suggest that his "system" is literally true, that his "daimons" and "tinctures," his "cones" and "gyres," his "husks" and "passionate" bodies, are things which actually exist; and then to intimate that, after all, they are not to be taken too seriously: "However," he writes in one place, after some abstruse astrological calculations, "I but suggest and wait judgment, being no scholar; and it may be, but seek a background for my thought, a painted scene." His vision ranges all the way from comparatively realistic estimates of Bernard Shaw, George Moore, Shakespeare, Napoleon and other famous people, to revelations such as the following upon the behavior of the soul after death: "The *Spirit* first floats horizontally within the man's dead body, but then rises until it stands at his head. The *Celestial Body* is also horizontal at first but lies in the opposite position, its feet where the *Spirit's* head is, and then rising, as does the *Spirit*, stands up at last at the feet of the man's body. The *Passionate Body* rises straight up from the genitals and stands in the center. The *Husk* remains in the body until the time for it to be separated and lost in *Anima Mundi.*" But even Yeats's ideas about history and about human personality are here so closely bound up with these mysteries that it is impossible to consider them separately, and even in endeavoring to disengage what seems most credible and intelligible in his books, we find ourselves deeply involved among supernatural phantoms and astrological machinery.

Yeats, then, appears to believe that human personality—that is, the different types of personality to be found in different individuals—varies in a kind of closed circle. The different types of people possible are all, as it were, regular stages in a circular journey to and fro between complete objectivity at one pole and complete subjectivity at the other; and this journey may be represented by the orbit of the moon, to which it corresponds. Let the moon represent subjectivity and the sun, objectivity; then the dark of the moon, when it is closest to the sun, is the phase of complete objectivity; and the full moon, which is farthest from the sun, is the phase of complete subjectivity. At these two opposite poles of the circle, human life is impossible: there exist only antipodal types of supernatural beings. But along the circumference of the circle, between these two ultra-human poles, there occur twenty-six phases which cover all possible types of human personality.

The theory of the variation of these types is, however, extremely complicated: Yeats has invented for himself a set of psychological components, with their own special terminology, which owes nothing to any other. He begins by assigning to "incarnate man" four "Faculties"; the Will, "by which is understood feeling that has not become desire . . . an energy as yet uninfluenced by thought, action, or emotion"; the Mask, which means "the image of what we wish to become, or of that to which we give our reverence"; the Creative Mind, "the intellect . . . all the mind that is consciously constructive"; and the Body of Fate, "the physical and mental environment, the changing human body, the stream of Phenomena as this affects a particular individual, all that is forced upon us from without." The Will is always opposite the Mask: "it looks into a painted picture." The Creative Mind is opposite the Body of Fate: "it looks into a photograph; but both look into something which is the opposite of themselves." The characters of the different phases are, accordingly, ascertained by combining four different elements found at the four different points where two diameters meet the circumference of the circle. The diameters are always drawn so that these points are equidistant from the points chosen for the sun and moon; and it is the Will which, as it

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

were, we follow around the clock—from whose place we count each phase. The characters of the individual faculties are determined by their farness or nearness from or to the opposite poles of objectivity and subjectivity.

Starting with the first of the human phases, to the right of the objective pole, the soul passes first through phases of almost purely physical life (where the examples are drawn from the Bacchuses and shepherds of the poets). It is, however, moving toward subjectivity (Walt Whitman, Alexandre Dumas): it is seeking itself, and as it does so, it becomes more beautiful. The ultra-human subjective phase, which apparently includes Christ, is described as "a phase of complete beauty," where "Thought and Will are indistinguishable, effort and attainment are indistinguishable . . . nothing is apparent but dreaming Will and the Image that it dreams." This is preceded and followed by phases which include Baudelaire and Beardsley; Keats and Giorgione; Blake and Rabelais; Dante and Shelley; and presumably Yeats himself: these may roughly be described as men who have withdrawn from the life of the world in order to live in their dream. But once the all-subjective phase is past, the soul

> would be the world's servant, and as it serves,
> Choosing whatever task's most difficult
> Among tasks not impossible, it takes
> Upon the body and upon the soul
> The coarseness of the drudge. Before the full
> It sought itself and afterwards the world.

And it is now leaving beauty behind and is headed toward deformity:

> Reformer, merchant, statesman, learned man,
> Dutiful husband, honest wife by turn,
> Cradle upon cradle, and all in flight and all
> Deformed because there is no deformity
> But saves us from a dream.

The soul has now come full circle: the three final human phases before the phase of complete objectivity are the Hunchback, the Saint and the Fool.

Yeats has worked all this out with great care and with considerable ingenuity. He has described each of the twenty-eight phases and supplied us with typical examples. What we find in this part of the book is Yeats's familiar preoccupation with the conflict between action and philosophy, reality and imagination. (It is amusing and characteristic that, according to his system, the part of humanity closest to the sun—that is, closest the objective nature—should be the part that is bathed in darkness, whereas the part which is furthest from the sun—that is, nearest the subjective nature—should be the part that is bright!) His sense of this conflict is profound, and it has usually inspired him well in his poetry and his essays. But in spite of the admirable poem, already published some time ago, from which I have quoted above and with which he has prefaced "A Vision," we rebel against the "Great Wheel": we decide that it and its accompanying wheels have ended by grinding to bits both Yeats's intelligence and his taste. We contrast with his turbid horoscopes the clear and distinguished outline of the portraiture of his memoirs.

There are, to be sure, certain passages of "A Vision" as brilliant as Yeats at his best. He writes, for example, of the phase of "the Receptive Man," to which he assigns Rembrandt and Synge: "The man wipes his breath from the window pane, and laughs in his delight at all the varied scene." And of the phase of "the Obsessed Man," to which he assigns Giorgione and Keats: "When we compare these images with those of any subsequent phase, each seems studied for its own sake; they float as in serene air, or lie hidden in some valley, and if they move it is to music that returns always to the same note, or in a dance that so returns upon itself that they seem immortal." And there follows what is perhaps the most eloquent passage in the book: "Here are born those women who are most touching in their beauty. Helen was of the phase; and she comes before the mind's eye elaborating a delicate personal discipline, as though she would make her whole life an image of a unified *antithetical* (that is, subjective) energy. While seeming an image of softness, and of quiet, she draws perpetually upon glass with a diamond. Yet she will not number among her sins anything that does not break that personal discipline, no matter what it may seem according to others' discipline; but if she fail in her own discipline she will not deceive herself, and for all the languor of her movements, and her indifference to the acts of others, her mind is never at peace. She will wander much alone as though she consciously meditated her masterpiece that shall be at the full moon, yet unseen by human eye, and when she returns to her house she will look upon her household with timid eyes, as though she knew that all powers of self-protection had been taken away, and that of her once violent *primary Tincture* (that is, objective element) nothing remained but a strange irresponsible innocence." And there is a strange imaginative power in the conception of the final sequence of the Hunchback, the Saint and the Fool.

But, after all, it is not Yeats's purpose here to dramatize, or to write fine prose: he is intent upon his system; and, as I say, I am convinced that that system has made mincemeat of his natural intelligence. One of the really interesting features of the scheme is its grouping together in the same phase of figures from very different fields or of figures whose human destiny seems to have been completely different: in the case of these latter personalities, he tries to show that of two individuals who differ in most superficial qualities, one of them may represent a kind of miscarriage of the type, while the other represents the type realizing its true possibilities. But the queer juxtapositions of names, which so startle and amuse us at first—George Moore and Bernard Shaw; Galsworthy and Queen Victoria; Napoleon and Shakespeare—though they do, no doubt, in certain cases, arise from deep intuitions into the underlying realities of character, seem more often—as in the wild combination of Flaubert, Herbert Spencer, Swedenborg and Dostoyevsky—excessively far-fetched. One can't help feeling that it would be equally easy to make out a case for putting many of these names at any one of several other phases. And the more closely one examines the system, the more arbitrary it seems. With such a variety of components in each phase, and with these components so variously influenced by other circumstances (I have greatly simplified the system in my account of it), it would not seem very difficult or wonderful to make them accommodate the whole of humanity. In the first place, Yeats's antithesis between objective and subjective seems open to grave objections. One feels that Yeats has been aware of these objections, and has invented, in order to meet them, an apparatus so complex that it entirely fails to impose itself by convincing us of its inevitability, because it could apparently be used to justify almost anything.

And the same sort of criticism applies to Yeats's philosophy of history. For the matter is complicated further

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

by imagining humanity as a whole, apart from the cycle of phases which may all be found at the same time in different individuals, to pass through a cycle of its own. This cycle is the "Great Year" of the ancients, and it is governed by the signs of the zodiac. By means of astrological calculations which, as he tells us in one place, have cost him "months of exhausting labor," he traces the revolution of western civilization through two of these historical cycles: the first of these completing itself in the course of the two thousand years preceding the Christian era; and the second, in the two thousand years since, so that it is drawing to a close in our own time. Yeats's summary of European history, by reason of the brilliance of his style and the excitement of his imagination, is not without its interest—is in fact the most readable part of his book; but like his discussion of personality, it seems blurred, encumbered and confused, by the fixed and intricate theories which he has tried to make it fit. Into his elaborate discussion of the adventures—the trances, returns and transformations—of the human soul after death, which makes up the fourth part of his book, I shall not attempt to follow him, even at a distance. Unlike the late Harry Houdini, Yeats appears to believe that the tappings and ectoplasms of spiritualistic seances are genuine manifestations. One feels, however, even here, the ambiguity of which I have spoken, in regard to the author's real beliefs. Most of his instances of the supernatural are drawn either from peasants' stories or from poetry itself, or ascribed to the Arabian wanderings of the imaginary personage, Owen Aherne; yet Yeats has written about them as drily, as technically and as solemnly as if he were composing a zoölogical textbook.

Since finishing Yeats's "Vision," I have been reading that other compendious treatise on human nature and destiny by that other great Irish writer of Yeats's generation: Shaw's "Guide to Socialism and Capitalism." In his "Great Wheel" of the twenty-eight phases, Yeats has situated Bernard Shaw at a phase which I calculate is removed from Yeats's own by about a quarter of the circumference and which is headed straight for the deformity of seeking, not the soul, but the world. I have already pointed out in these pages, in writing of Yeats's autobiography, the striking and dramatic contrast between the careers of these two remarkable men, coming from eighteenth-century Dublin into the outside modern world. Shaw accepted the technique of science and set himself to master the problems of industrial democratic society. Yeats rejected the methods of naturalism and applied himself to the problems of the individual mind. And while Shaw lives in the middle of London, Yeats has secluded himself in a tower on the farthest Irish coast. Their respective literary testaments, published almost at the same time, mark as it were the final points of their divergence: in his "Intelligent Woman's Guide," Shaw bases all human hope and happiness on an equal distribution of income, which he says will finally make impossible even the pessimism of a Swift or a Voltaire; while Yeats, a Protestant like Shaw, has, in "A Vision," made the life of humanity contingent on the movements of the stars. "The day is far off," he concludes, "when the two halves of man can define each its own unity in the other as in a mirror, Sun in Moon, Moon in Sun, and so escape out of the Wheel."

The misapplication on this scale in the field of psychology and history of one of the first intellects of our time is probably the price that our time has to pay for the possession of a great poet.

EDMUND WILSON.

# Idea and Power in Wedlock

*Lenin, by Valeriu Marcu. Translated by E. W. Dickes. New York: The Macmillan Company. 412 pages. $5.*

LENIN was on speaking terms with Nadeshda Constantinovna Krupskaya, his wife, but if he ever spoke to her about anything but party affairs and revolution there is no record of it in this biography. Probably nowhere else, either. There really was little "private life" in Lenin's mature years. The revolutionary movement was the heroine of his romance. The party of the Revolution was the object of his courtship, and when the Revolution came to be, he nursed it, lived by it, and died in it. Mr. Marcu confined himself to the socio-political Lenin, for the study of whom there was enough material at hand. Of the many published biographies of Lenin, written either by uncritical party-eulogists, or by political opponents, equally unwilling and unable to see the "whole" man, Mr. Marcu's Lenin is the winning exception. This biographer neither accepts nor rejects Lenin. He wages no battle for the Lord or against the Devil. Successfully enough, he tries to portray Lenin and to elucidate Leninism.

In Marcu's story Lenin appears the master-mind of the Revolution which he was. He inherited the idea of the Revolution from his brother, who was executed for an attempt on the Tsar's life. He imbibed a revolutionary attitude to Russian reality from his student environment. He saw Tsarism for what it was, senile, corrupt, inefficient, but alive because it rested on control of actual power. And he thought of Socialism, the antidote to Tsarism, also in terms of power. This conception of the Revolution as the stepping-stone to power left no room for romantic loyalties to party standards, to revolutionaries' code of ethics, to obligations of personal friendship. Revolution in Lenin's mind was neither goddess nor hell's miscarriage. The criterion of all things was power. Tactics, parties, revolution itself are good if they lead to power, and are to be discarded, condemned, destroyed, if not so directed. Lenin's first task, from the viewpoint of his power-theory, was to unleash all the forces that would tend to upset the Tsarist balance of power. When the power of the State was landed, and subordinated to Socialist objectives, he set out to tame the forces of destruction. Had Lenin died upon the laurels of the first accomplishment, his name would have remained high with revolutionary fighters only. Had he done only the second, his name might have been considered for a place in a bourgeois Hall of Fame. To the extent that he has done his share in both directions, he has established himself in history as the unique combination of revolutionary and statesman in one person. He said to a friend soon after the seizure of power: "We have great difficulties ahead of us. We are old, hardened revolutionaries. We have not learned to carry on industry and the State. But we shall learn." Lenin and his old revolutionary guard had to cease being "professional revolutionaries" and become statesmen when Russia ceased being the name of a rebellion and took on the shape of a new order. At a later day, replying to Tory strictures on the political violence of the Laborites, as exemplified in the general strike criticism that Labor was not fit to govern, a conservative leader of British labor, J. H. Thomas, said: "When labor becomes the government, it will act as the government and govern the country." So did Lenin.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Marcu emphasizes Lenin's realistic, non-sentimental appreciation of nationalism as a driving force to be harnessed in the service of his revolutionary aims. He was the master strategist of the Revolution in Russia because he knew his Russia so well. Abroad he lacked that detailed knowledge. "Lenin always won when he relied on Russian forces, human and material, within Russia's frontiers; usually he lost when he speculated with men and things outside of Russia." Eventually he realized that Europe was a car of a different garage. Poking fun at the very long thesis of revolutionary behavior adopted at an International Communist Congress, he remarked that the resolution was admirable and excellently adapted to Russian conditions, but would be of no use to the foreigner. The foreigner, he said, would not be able to read it. If he read it, he would not be able to understand it. If he understood it, he would not be able to put it into practice.

The youthful Lenin conceived the idea of revolution, with power as its objective, and the means of realizing the Socialist goal. It took history twenty-five years to bring about the wedlock of the Idea to Power with Lenin as the master of ceremonies. But then the Idea was no longer its younger self. Of such is the nature of power. It so often destroys those whom it loves. It so rarely achieves what it was called in to do.

J. B. S. HARDMAN.

# The Critic as Artist

*By Way of Art, by Paul Rosenfeld. New York: Coward-McCann. 307 pages. $2.50.*

MR. PAUL ROSENFELD is one of the few American critics who, like Oscar Wilde, consider the function of the artist and the critic similar: the creation, in both cases, of form through the medium of a complete understanding of an experience. As a result, there is, in his pages, little biographical material or deduction. He is scarcely engaged either with the personal history of the artist or with his formative influences: but rather with the work of art with which he comes in contact, and which he analyzes in terms of his own esthetic experience.

His essays are attempts to recreate for the reader his own intellectual and emotional response to specific works of art; and to explain their relation to some formal and permanent principle of harmony. His perceptions are keen, his senses accurate and his mind sensitive. The essays, therefore, are informative, witty, thought-provoking and, at their best, or even second-best, beautiful. Like those of Poe or Huneker, they may be read pleasurably without specific reference to, or knowledge of, their subject, for their philosophy and their colorful, intricate presentation. What he says in this book of the style of Gertrude Stein might well be applied to his own: "By their sound, their quality, their order and sequence, the words giving external information . . . simultaneously communicate" the internal impulses of his subjects.

"By Way of Art" consists of about thirty-five short pieces, all of which are here reprinted; but none of which seems undeserving of this permanent form. The best appear to be the two entitled "Sculpture by Gaston Lachaise" and "Turning to America: the Corn Dance." The first is a profound understanding and acceptance of the general function and method of sculpture and the work of the artist, Lachaise. The method here is the characteristic one of examining the work in terms of form: line, material, mass, light and geometric shape; and of connecting form with the human experience which the artist has caused to inhere in it:

> Those serenely breathing pieces sad with great feeling address the eye as never stuff of flesh or modeled clay. Each stands innocent of the intention of imitation or visual deception. . . . What philosophical ideas attach to the sculpture are made consequent to the physical form of the rough, veined and gleaming stuff.

"Turning to America" is an essay in this same method, applied here to the contours of a country. It is the record of a half-continental railway trip through the Middle and Southwest to Santa Fé and an Indian festival. Here he observes America physically, like a pioneer or an artist. He is never moralistic: neither with approval nor condemnation. He sees neither Rotary, advertising nor social implications: no "hinterland" at all. Only the "informing gorgeousness" of an "apathetically billowing country" or "roads speeding blankly toward the horizon . . . and the unchanging, fecund present."

Also especially worthy of mention are "Emanuel Carnevali's Book"; "The Letters of Madame Mère du Regent" and "El Greco's Portrait of Himself," described for form as "a ghost shooting to heaven, constrained and projected by two flanking earth-brown masses."

The publishers have made the error of binding Mr. Rosenfeld's book in a thin, pretty Japan paper, too fragile to withstand many handlings, though undoubtedly decorative.

MELVIN P. LEVY.

# Motherhood in Bondage

*Motherhood in Bondage, by Margaret Sanger. New York: Brentano's. 435 pages. $2.50.*

OF THIS volume of letters written to her by women ignorant of contraceptives, Margaret Sanger says: "Although the squeamish may denounce this book of human documents as an unnecessary exposure of human horrors and clinical cases, its essential value consists precisely in the uncanny power of those naïve confessions—unguarded, laconic and illiterate as many of them are—to make us see life as it is actually lived close to the earth, without respect for the polite assumptions and conventions of sophisticated society." They reveal the enforced maternity that fills the clinics, that breeds the unfit, and that poisons love at its source by fear. And prevalent in these confessions is " . . . the man who, like those natives of certain primitive tribes described by anthropologists, has not yet learned to correlate under the law of cause and effect the sexual act and the birth of a child nine months later."

Conscious and planned lives are made possible by contraceptive measures. A sophisticated society might doubt the amazing ignorance of such measures were it not for the indubitable authenticity of these letters, tragic or pathetic, with a sparse dignity of words or with a diffuse tabloid sentimentality. To compare them, however, to "the naked power of the old folk-ballads," as the editor does, or to "the chorus of a Greek tragedy," as the publishers do, is to belittle by an undeserved praise documents that do not need it to point their summons to the cause for the sake of which they have been made public.

JEAN B. TEMPLE.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# The Slave of Conquest

*Tamerlane: The Earth Shaker, by Harold Lamb. Illustrated. New York: Robert M. McBride and Company. $4.*

HEMISPHERICALLY speaking, the world has always been provincial. Each half has considered the other uncivilized and despised its histories. On the western half, we have had no example of a great conqueror except Alexander, with the recent addition of Napoleon, who—as Mr. Lamb reminds us—died a failure. The name Tamerlane suggests to us merely ghostly pyramids of skulls and Marlowe's careening line. Few of us have any clear notion of the man whose accomplishment was greater than that of either Alexander or Napoleon: Timur, as he was known to his friends, or *Timur-i-lang,* Timur the Limper —*from a wound received in battle early in life*—as he was contemptuously referred to by the enemies he defeated. Yet the dazzling story of his career, as told by Mr. Lamb, offers much material to any that still have a taste for meditating on the character of man and the nature of his achievements.

But first the American reader must disabuse himself of the lurid picture of the Tatar warrior as a barbarian and a brigand, raiding the fringes of civilization at the head of wild nomads. This Timur, who all his life was a lover of chess and architecture, was no barbarian. And in his capacity of ruler, training a great army to perfect discipline, rebuilding cities after he had destroyed them, and welding an empire that stretched from India to the Mediterranean, he was in no sense of the word a brigand.

He began life as the son of a weak and obscure chieftain, but with all the qualities of a leader: he was bold, decisive, loyal to his followers, and tenacious in any purpose he formed. From about the time he was thirty until the end of his life, at over seventy, he never met defeat. He became a master strategist, sparing those that submitted and exterminating those that opposed him as if they had been rats. He allowed neither favorites nor indulgences to corrupt his will; his pride was tremendous and his vanity apparently slight. Throughout all of Central Asia, his word gradually became law. In short, he seems to have been a living symbol of the man of action. He died, appropriately, on the road to what was to have been his last and greatest enterprise: the conquest of China. And a month after his death, his empire was disrupted by civil wars.

Here was a man with the endurance of iron and the resources of genius; he probably achieved as much as any one man can hope to achieve by force on this planet. Yet the purpose to which he devoted these magnificent powers awaited only his death to collapse. One can hardly escape feeling a certain awe, at the sheer intensity of his character; but in weighing the empty results of his career, it is equally impossible to avoid the discovery that this master of the world was the slave of his own craving for command. Out of this appetite came the splendor of Samarkand.

Mr. Lamb's vivid and swiftly moving account is sympathetic and apparently documented with great care. In this reviewer, at least, he has aroused a keen desire to know more of the sources that from time to time he quotes. His style is popular, sharpened with considerable insight into human motives. Of the Mongols, for example, whom Timur conquered, he says: "Deception was an accomplishment with them, and intrigue a fine art. They were a fighting race, but so long accustomed to warfare that they only took up arms as a last resource." This is not distinguished prose, but it is fluent, and filled with the dramatic excitement of a great tale, which has become almost a mythology.

LAWRENCE S. MORRIS.

# Brooding Eagle

*Cawdor and Other Poems, by Robinson Jeffers. New York: Horace B. Liveright. 166 pages. $2.50.*

THIS book takes its title from a long narrative poem of tragic import. The poet tells us that it "makes a third with 'Tamar' and 'The Women at Point Sur.' " While in these earlier works, he says, humanity was seen looking westward against the ocean and upward against the stars, respectively, here it looks eastward, against the earth, "reclaiming a little dignity from that association." It is true that this tragedy seems slightly nearer us than the others, a more credible and therefore a larger and darker shape. Yet such greatness as the poem possesses is not inherent either in its background or its fable, but rather in Jeffers' personal vision. Action and atmosphere are not caught as inextricably in the same net here as was the case in the other narrative poems. The black fate of the hero-victim is perhaps too special to be impressive. The most notable passages in the poem, though linked up with the narrative, could be deleted without hurting it vitally, and could, indeed, stand alone as separate lyrics. They center about the motif of a caged, maimed eagle, and the lines that take their drive from the image of the dying bird are particularly fine.

> . . . the eagle's phantom perceived
> Its prison and its wound were not its peculiar wretchedness,
> All that lives was maimed and bleeding, caged or in blindness,
> Lopped at the ends with death and conception, and shrewd
> Cautery of pain on the stumps to stifle the blood, but not
> Refrains for all that; life was more than its functions
> And accidents, more important than its pains and pleasures,
> A torch to burn in with pride, a necessary
> Ecstasy in the run of the cold substance,
> And scape-goat of the greater world. (But as for me,
> I have heard the summer dust crying to be born
> As much as ever flesh cried to be quiet.)
> Pouring itself on fulfillment the eagle's passion
> Left life behind and flew at the sun, its father.
> The great unreal talons took peace for prey
> Exultantly, their death beyond death; stooped upward, and struck
> Peace like a white fawn in a dell of fire.

Most of the lyrics which conclude the volume and which, like a few fragments of "Cawdor," are heavy with the poet's dark philosophy, are more memorable than the piece which gives the book its title. Unfortunately, they are too long to quote. There is sufficient evidence that Jeffers has lost none of his immense power. He has merely failed to use it throughout the book as terribly as he can.

BABETTE DEUTSCH.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# For the New York Galleries

*Exploring New York's Art Galleries, by Margaret Breuning. New York: Robert McBride and Company. $2.50.*

THE Metropolitan Museum has grown now to proportions that make it one of the interesting museums of the world; and you can find your way about to its treasures with study and with a number of booklets, brochures, pamphlets and catalogues, to be bought there at the museum and elsewhere. All that, however, means trouble and foresight and time. This book by Margaret Breuning, the art critic of the New York Evening Post, serves a happy end by spreading out the Metropolitan, wisely and smoothly and exactly, for the visitor. The underlying interest of the writer is both human and critical, never foolish and never loose, but always easy and full of intelligence and warm choice. If to my taste there is a certain slighting of the greatness of Veronese and Tintoretto, this may in the end be the sensible thing to do, since those artists are so scantily represented in our museum. Otherwise the plan by which this guide proceeds, by schools, countries and gallery arrangement, is both workable and stimulating.

Miss Breuning's book serves another function in bringing to one's attention and within one's reach those other collections in New York that might be overlooked even by experienced citizens and visitors. It covers not only the Metropolitan, but also the Brooklyn Museum, the Museum of the New York Public Library, the Barnard Cloisters, the Museum of the New York Historical Society and others. It is an excellent achievement fulfilling a real demand.

S. Y.

# Fiction Notes

*Victim and Victor, by John R. Oliver. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.50.*

THE STORY of a deposed priest heart-broken by his exile from the Church is so anachronistic in interest as to make its plausible presentation a literary achievement. The theme belongs to the mood and measure of Mrs. Humphry Ward and Elizabeth Stuart Phelps. It would have stirred excited sympathy in the eighties. Today it is interesting as a psychological document presented in narrative form by so able a specialist as Dr. Oliver. Although the literary method is lame and the characters —except that of the "subject"—are lifeless, the case-history is absorbing enough to overcome disbelief in a situation so remote from current attention. Surprisingly, and by a psychological route, the reader finds himself concerned with the validity of "vocation" and puzzling over hen-and-egg precedences of character or conduct. So Dr. Oliver, a Churchman turned physician, demonstrates that the cloth is only turned lining out today, and—by injections of psychotherapy, the modern equivalent for spiritual concerns—revives interests long considered dead in the effete odor of sanctity.

D. B. W.

*Undine, by Olive Schreiner. New York: Harper and Brothers. $2.50.*

THIS FIRST novel by Olive Schreiner, begun when she was sixteen and supposedly left unfinished, is now presented by her husband with the recently-discovered concluding chapters. It is a quaint work in the light of present conditions—an artless expression of youthful revolt against life as she found it for women. The story is that of a "strong-minded" maiden in the seventies, and her tragic necessity of choice between the "higher life" and the love of a tyrannical and bewhiskered Adonis. Through the naïve sentimentality of the "romance" gleam occasional fierce sincerities. There are rude and naturalistic gestures of defiance or despair, although the protagonists' speech is confined to the conventional sob-stuff of the day. Superficially viewed the book is farcical in its incongruity. But it is to be remembered, as we laugh, that it was the heroic stand made by Olive Schreiner and her kind against the ideas prevailing in their era that has enabled us to consider such situations as incredibly absurd!

D. B. W.

*Gotobedde Lane, by Marian Bower. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company. $2.50.*

IT IS appropriate that this book should deal with antique furniture and outworn proprieties. For in its treatment it is also a throwback, through Arnold Bennett, to the true Victorian novel where characters and their story mattered more than what critics would be apt to say about their author. Such an approach is rare in a writer obviously acquainted with psychoanalysis. But it succeeds in making "Gotobedde Lane" grow out in three dimensions, inhabited by real people, among whom the Ormes bulk large: Job Orme whose word was as good as a written guarantee, his weak wife, his wastrel son, his fantastic brother, and his rigorous daughter Keturah, whose emotions were sublimated into competence. The story grows block on block, each bit fitted in and firmly joined with a workmanlike air wholly free from that febrile mannerism which spells modernity. This is the work of an accomplished craftsman, even though against their convincing background the characters themselves appear faintly stylized.

B. G.

## Contributors

S. K. RATCLIFFE, English journalist and well known lecturer in America on British and international affairs, was formerly editor of The Statesman, Calcutta.

HAROLD LEWIS COOK is an American writer at present living in France.

ALEXANDER MEIKLEJOHN, former President of Amherst College, is now Brittingham Professor of Philosophy at the University of Wisconsin and director of the experimental college there. He is the author of "The Liberal College."

VALESKA BARI, a student of social and industrial conditions, sends us this paper from San Francisco.

MARJORIE MCFARLAND has been a student of economics and sociology at Antioch College and is now doing research work for the Consumers' League of Ohio on women and children in industry.

J. B. S. HARDMAN is editor of The Advance, official organ of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America.

MELVIN T. LEVY is the author of "Matrix" and of "Wedding."

JEAN B. TEMPLE was formerly a teacher at the Walden School, New York City, and the Ferrar School.

LAWRENCE S. MORRIS is a contributor of sketches, stories and articles to various periodicals.

BABETTE DEUTSCH, poet, novelist and critic, is the author of "In Such a Night," and other books.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THEATRES


"HOLIDAY"

*"It is a gay comedy particularly worth seeing."—N. Y. Times.*

*ARTHUR HOPKINS presents PHILIP BARRY'S ultra-successful comedy. Settings by ROBERT EDMOND JONES.*

PLYMOUTH Thea., W. 45th St. Evs. 8:35
Mats. Thurs. & Sat., 2:35

Engagement Extended All Through January

RUTH DRAPER

in her original character sketches

**Every Evening 8:40, and Matinees, Thurs. and Sat. 2:40**

COMEDY Theatre, 41st St., East of B'way.
**Management ACTOR MANAGERS**


WINTER RESORT


Take advantage of the glorious winter days with us at

**COMMUTERS LODGE**
**CAMP AS-ER**

**delightfully situated in the Westchester Blue Mountains**

**50 minutes from Grand Central Station**

72 trains daily. Monthly commutation, $10.40. Where one can enjoy the comradeship of fellow progressives. Reasonable rates—Special prices for week end Parties—Excellent cooking —Skating on our own Lake—All sports.

**Furnace Wood Road, Peekskill, N. Y.**

OPEN ALL YEAR 'ROUND Tel. Peekskill 1403

Management BORDEN BROS.


GENERAL


EARN $25 WEEKLY

Spare time, writing for newspapers, hagazines . Experience unnecessary. Details FREE.

**Press Syndicate, 1060, St. Louis, Mo.**

Albert Rhys Williams

*author of "The Russian Land," will speak at a meeting on the subject*

Life and Song of
The Russian Land

*at the Martin Beck Theater, New York, Sunday, January 20, 8:30 P. M.*

Peasant songs in costume by
Nina Tarasova

Film: Life in a Soviet Village

***Tickets $1-$3***

Society for
Cultural Relations
with Russia
22 East 55th St.
Regent 8564

***Copies of "The Russian Land" $1***

from The New Republic



YIDDISH ART THEATRE

**14th St., East of Union Square**
**Telephone Stuyvesant 0523**

Maurice Schwartz, director,
announces
Every Friday Evening and Saturday
and Sunday
Matinee and Evening.

"God, Man and Devil"

A new version of
**Jacob Gordin's Masterpiece**
Settings by **Mordecai Gorelik**

*English Synopsis Supplied*


GENERAL


REAL HARRIS TWEED

The aristocrats of all sports wear—direct from makers. Samples free. Suit-lengths by Mail. Carriage Paid.
**NEWALL, 159 Stornoway, Scotland**


LECTURES


THE PEOPLE'S INSTITUTE
**Program January 18-26**
**AT COOPER UNION**
(8th St. and Astor Place, at 8 o'clock)
Admission Free

Friday, Jan. 18—**Everett Dean Martin:** "Freedom of Speech and the Press—John Milton and Afterwards."

Sunday, Jan. 20—Concert by the American Orchestral Society, **Chalmers Clifton,** Conductor.

Tuesday, Jan. 22—The American Institute Science Lectures. **Dr. Gerald L. Wendt,** Pennsylvania State College: "Phosphorescence and Fluorescence."

**AT MUHLENBERG BRANCH LIBRARY**
(209 West 23rd St., at 8:30 o'clock)

Monday, Jan. 21—**Mark Doren:** "Anatole France."

Wednesday, Jan. 23—**Scott Buchanan:** "The Essay — The Mechanics of Thought."

Thursday, Jan. 24—**E. G. Spaulding:** "Recent Developments of the Organic View."

Saturday, Jan. 26—**Mortimer J. Adler:** "Probability — The Weight of the Facts."


GENERAL


**From Georgia;**—Paper shell pecans—large, meaty, deliciously flavored; average size of nut, ten centimetres in circumference. Our five pound service means you receive C.O.D. each month, for a year, five pounds of these pecans—carefully selected, neatly packed. Write for details and send for free sample. Address Georgia Plantations, 128 Park Place, Macon, Georgia.


FURNISHED ROOM


**A Lady will Rent** a large, bright room in her apartment to business or professional woman. Elevator, telephone and all other modern conveniences. $15 a week. Light breakfast if desired. Appointment by telephone, Ashland 3219, or write Box No. 612, New Republic. References.


CHILD CARE


Nursery School and Boarding Home near San Francisco for normal children between 1½ and 4½ years. Director has had nursery school training and teaching experience. References educators and patrons. Write **Mrs. Rutledge Fullerton, P. O. Box 387, Sausalito, Calif.**


POSITION WANTED


**Reference Librarian** interested in American Revolutionary period would like secretarial or research work for historian. Address: Box 614, The New Republic.

**AVIATION OFFICER** on six months leave wants exciting and interesting occupation of any description.
Address: Box 613, The New Republic.



When You Travel

***Send us your itinerary—well in advance if possible—and let The New Republic follow you. Others have found it a refreshing addition to European papers of the rural press.***

The New REPUBLIC
421 West 21st Street,
New York City


DISCUSSION


THE GROUP
A Clearing House of Opinion
meets at
Auditorium—150 West 85th Street
**JOHN COWPER POWYS**
will speak on
**IS OUR CIVILIZATION DOOMED?**
Tuesday, January 15th, at 8:30 P. M.
Admission 50 cents Organized 1918
S. A. Seligson, Director, 285 Madison Avenue.


BOOKS


THAT BOOK YOU WANT!

We hold 1,250,000 of the best books New, Secondhand, Out-of-Print—on all subjects. Books on approval. Also Rare Books and Sets of Authors. Catalogues free (25 issued). Outline requirements and interests.

**FOYLES,**
**121 Charing Cross Road,**
**London, England.**

FOUR NINETEEN

ANY BOOK OF ANY PUBLISHER POSTHASTE AND POSTPAID THROUGH THE NEW REPUBLIC BOOKSTORE, NEW YORK CITY

WEST 21st STREET


LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED